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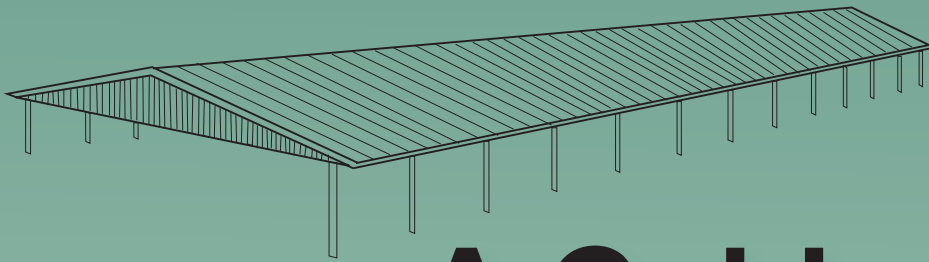
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"PB1770-A Guide for Considering and Developing a Farmers Market in Tennessee," The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, 07-0239 PB1770-1.2M-6/07 R12-4010-026-007-07, http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_agexmkt/6

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A Guide for Considering and Developing a Farmers Market in Tennessee



DISCLAIMER

As a quality educational tool, every effort has been made by the authors to make this publication as complete and accurate as possible. It is intended to serve as a guide and not as the ultimate authority on farmers markets. This publication is for educational purposes and does not serve as or constitute legal advice or an interpretation of the law. The authors are not engaged in rendering legal or regulatory advice.

This information is intended to assist in the educational process, not to serve as a step-by-step or how-to recipe.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Future educational materials to be developed to further assist in the enhancement of farmers markets in Tennessee might include specific location considerations for markets, starting a “farmers only” market, a handbook for farmers market managers, variables that indicate ideal farmers market size for a community, baseline data on Tennessee farmers markets and a handbook for farmers market vendors.

A Guide for Considering and Developing a Farmers Market in Tennessee

June 2007

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This publication was made possible in part by an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture with funds provided from the sale of agricultural specialty license plates (the “Ag Tag”). Funds generated from “Ag Tag” sales are returned to the agricultural community in the form of grants for youth programs, market development projects and other agricultural activities. Additional information about Tennessee agricultural products and the “Ag Tag” is available at the Tennessee Department of Agriculture’s promotional Web site, www.picktnproducts.org.

FOREWORD

Is there a revitalization of farmers markets in Tennessee? Based on what surely seems to be an increased interest in farmers markets from all across the state, the answer just might be yes.

In the *Center for Profitable Agriculture*, we have observed a great deal of new interest in farmers markets from the counties, cities and communities that are developing plans and proposals to become declared one of the Governor's Three-Star Communities by the Department of Economic and Community Development. We have also observed an increased interest from consumers in buying fresh produce from local growers.

Farmers markets have a strong history of providing farmers with a good option for selling products directly to consumers, but they are not just a place to buy and sell farm products. Farmers markets have proven to assist in contributing to a healthy local economy as well.

We appreciate the great partnership that exists between the *Center for Profitable Agriculture* and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. A special thanks is extended to TDA for the assistance provided in the development and printing of this publication.

In the development of this publication, we have uncovered many previously published resources on farmers markets. We have searched the Web, consulted books and manuals and even dusted off some antique publications to uncover as much information as possible. We made on-site visits to farmers markets all over the state, talked to vendors and consumers, sampled products and snapped many photos. We visited farmers markets in ideal and spells of inclement weather. We parked on concrete, on the curb, on grass, gravel and chert. We shopped in air conditioning, under a metal roof, no roof, umbrellas and shade cloth. We have studied, witnessed and experienced farmers markets firsthand to develop this educational information.

We have found that farmers and community leaders need a concise resource to help them consider and then develop farmers markets. Some may use this publication as a guide to decide not to pursue the idea of a farmers market, while others may use it more as a roadmap for development and implementation of their local market.

We intend for the publication to serve both those who are considering a new farmers market, as well as those groups who are looking to improve an existing market. We also expect this publication will be useful for those folks who do not decide to pursue a farmers market and those who decide to proceed in development of a market organization.

We are pleased to provide this publication as an educational tool to assist in the consideration and development of farmers markets across the state. Farmers markets provide benefits to both farmers and consumers and are often a common part of "community development" and downtown revitalization projects. This publication represents a response to the needs expressed by people across Tennessee who want to consider establishing or improving a farmers market.

Rob Holland
Extension Specialist
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This educational publication was developed in response to the needs and vision expressed by many people involved with farmers markets throughout Tennessee. Appreciation is expressed to the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, the Tennessee Farm Bureau and the Tennessee Farmers Market Association for the number of ways these organizations provide corporate support to farmers markets and for the many ways they have supported the development of this publication.

Appreciation is extended to Joe Gaines, Assistant Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Agriculture; Paul Nordstrom, Chief of Marketing Services, Tennessee Department of Agriculture; and Joe Pearson, Director of Commodities, Tennessee Farm Bureau; for their leadership in the initiation of the project that launched the development of this publication. Funding for the development and printing of this publication was provided through an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture with funds provided from the sale of agricultural specialty license plates (the “Ag Tag”).

Special thanks is extended to the many market managers, board members and county Extension agents who provided specific market operation information to be included in this publication. We also extend thanks to the various market managers, vendors and farmers market board members who reviewed this publication prior to printing and provided input and suggestions

Numerous people provided information, consultation and interviews for specific subject matter included in this publication. Special appreciation is extended to the following folks who assisted in various ways in compiling information:

Patricia Clark – Tennessee Department of Agriculture
Anne Dalton – UT Extension, *Center for Profitable Agriculture*
Laura Fortune – Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Market Development
Joe Gaines – Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Market Development
Ann Hopton – Tennessee Department of Health
Kim Martinez – UT Extension, *Center for Profitable Agriculture*
Bill Morris – UT Extension, Food Science and Technology
Paul Nordstrom – Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Market Development
Ben Sanders – UT Extension, *Center for Profitable Agriculture*
John Sanford – Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Regulatory Services
Bob Williams – Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Regulatory Services
Ron Wilson – Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Regulatory Services
Buddy Woodson – Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Regulatory Services
Amanda Ziehl – UT Extension, *Center for Profitable Agriculture*

Special appreciation is extended to the following members of the team who provided the professional peer review of this educational publication:

Laura Fortune – Tennessee Department of Agriculture
Joe Gaines – Tennessee Department of Agriculture
Bill Morris – UT Extension, Food Science and Technology
Annette Wszelaki – UT Extension, Plant Sciences
Michael Wilcox – UT Extension, Agricultural Economics

Finally, special recognition is extended to Wanda Russell and Kim Stallings for their dedicated service to the editing, layout and graphic design of this publication.

CONTENTS

Foreword 2

Acknowledgements..... 3

Chapter 1 – Setting the Stage..... 5

Chapter 2 – Steps and Phases of Consideration and Development 8

Chapter 3 – Location and Facility Considerations.....26

Chapter 4 – Policies and Operating Guidelines 35

Chapter 5 – Other Operating Issues 38

Chapter 6 – Additional Educational Materials/Resources 46

Chapter 7 – Summary48

Appendices..... 49

 Appendix A –Sample Farmers Market Bylaws.....50

 Appendix B – Sample Mail Survey for Potential Vendor/Growers Prior to Market Establishment.....52

 Appendix C – Sample Telephone Survey of Potential Customers.....55

 Appendix D – Sample Outline of a Vendor Application Form.....58

 Appendix E – Sample Mail Survey for Growers after End of Season.....59

 Appendix F – Sample Personal Interview for Customers during Market Operation.....61

 Appendix G – Sample Farmers Market Site Review Sheet.....65

 Appendix H – Sample Farmers Market Safety Checklist.....66

 Appendix I – Sample Farmers Market Rules.....68

 Appendix J – Additional Resources That Address Safe Food-Handling Practices.....70

CHAPTER 1 – Setting the Stage

This publication provides an introduction to the various steps and stages that tend to unfold as farmers markets are considered, evaluated and developed. It includes actual data about and from existing farmers markets in Tennessee. These data include revealing testimonies, quotes, comments and input from vendors, managers and shoppers. It contains information about facilities and a useful orientation to policies, rules and guidelines. Other operational issues are highlighted too. Many concepts and issues are further explained through the examples in the appendices.



...“a common facility or area where several farmers/growers gather on a regular, recurring basis to sell a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables and other farm products from independent stands directly to consumers.”

To set the stage for the remainder of the publication, Chapter 1 begins with a discussion of the definition of a farmers market and is followed by various sections that address the history of farmers markets, identify potential market benefits and challenges, emphasize how individual markets are unique and provide an overview of the people involved with organizing and operating community-based farmers markets.

Defining Farmers Markets

For most consumers, the term farmers market brings positive images and connotations to mind. There is an inherent image of local farmers selling what they grow to local shoppers. However, when various types of events and establishments self-described and promoted as farmers markets are closely studied, such a simple image is not so clear. Lots of issues cloud the simple image of a farmers market, including farmer versus non-farmer vendors, local versus non-local products, wholesale versus retail sales and private versus public benefit. The definition of a particular farmers market can be unique, but the following is often the desired market image: farmers selling farm products that they produce to individual consumers at a public location on a periodic, seasonal basis during the growing season.

In this publication, farmers market is defined as “a common facility or area where several farmers/growers gather on a regular, recurring basis to sell a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables and other farm products from independent stands directly to consumers.” This is based on the USDA definition and adapted to our experiences here in Tennessee.

Lots of ink has been used to debate the correct spelling of a farmers market. Is it farmers market, farmer’s market or farmers’ market? Rather than enter into such debates, we have chosen to follow the spelling adopted by USDA and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and use “farmers markets” throughout this publication. Because we support the thought that a farmers market is a group of farmers who possess the market and have a mutual association for the benefit of many farmers, we have used the spelling farmers’ markets in previous publications developed by the *Center for Profitable Agriculture*. However, not using the spelling that includes an apostrophe placed at the end of farmers in this publication does not imply any lack of support for the philosophy that a farmers market is a “mutual association.”

Farmers markets provide an efficient and effective retailing opportunity for farmers.

History

The concept provided by a farmers market is not a modern invention. The Romans were the first to use farmers markets. The use of farmers markets in the Middle Ages helped lead to the development of cities and villages in Europe. By the 17th and 18th centuries, farmers markets were an integral part of American towns. Boston is reported to have established the first farmers market in 1663. Philadelphia established a farmers market in 1710. In most towns and villages, the farmers market could be found alongside the town hall meeting house and the local church.

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, urban farmers markets grew and established sizeable permanent structures. Often they became commercial and social centers. Interest in farmers markets seems to peak and fall with unpredictable seasonality. The 1930s began a period of serious decline for farmers markets that continued through the 1960s. Renewed interest in farmers markets began in the 1970s. In the late 1990s, and especially since 2000, there has been growing interest in farmers markets.

Potential Benefits

Farmers markets may offer benefits to farmers, consumers and communities. Not only can a market result in economic benefits for neighboring businesses, but it can benefit the community as a whole. Some consumers are motivated by fresh, local, high-quality and hard-to find products that are often available at farmers markets. Many consumers also desire to support local farmers and the local economy while enjoying the fun and friendly atmosphere provided by a local farmers market that is truly a part of the community.

Farmers markets provide an efficient and effective retailing opportunity for farmers. They also provide new and small farmers with opportunities to interact with customers and generate income from small-scale production. Farmers markets can benefit the community by preserving neighborhoods and encouraging the retention of agricultural land near cities. In many urban areas, farmers markets also can lead to reviving central business districts.

A great deal of time and energy must be invested in the consideration, study and planning of a farmers market that is destined for long-term success.

Challenges

Developing a successful farmers market is not without challenges. A great deal of time and energy must be invested in the consideration, study and planning of a farmers market that is destined for long-term success. Successful farmers markets encompass a complicated, overlapping working system that includes multiple people (with individual goals, objectives and agendas) operating a venture (the market) with a common purpose (for the market as an entity to be a success) in a public setting with input from not only the consuming public, but also numerous government and private agencies, departments and organizations.

Each Market Is Different

Every farmers market and would-be farmers market is different. The customer base, infrastructure, locations, facilities and the people involved differ from one market to another. In some markets, consumers simply enjoy the experience of the market and will pay premium prices for products, while at other locations, consumers are only looking for bargain prices. Therefore, there is no recipe, cookie-cutter or fill-in-the blank approach to launch a successful farmers market – too many issues and considerations involved in the development are dependent on market-specific situations.

There is no recipe,
cookie-cutter or fill-in-the
blank approach to launch a
successful farmers market.

Despite both an interest from community leaders in establishing a farmers market and from consumers in buying local products, not all farmers markets experience long-term success. Therefore, there is good reason for farmers markets to be well-planned, developed, launched and operated.

People Involved

Though farmers and consumers are often considered the ultimate benefactors of farmers markets, a successful market only results from the efforts of many other people. It is not uncommon for numerous individuals from a wide variety of organizations and agencies to be involved with the development and operation of a local farmers market. In fact, it is common to have leaders of farmers market initiatives represent numerous organizations and agencies, including the following:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Tourism Board
- Economic Development Board
- Mainstreet Organizations
- Extension
- City and County Officials
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Economic Development District
- Local Utility Systems
- Street, Highway and Sanitation Departments
- Police and Fire Departments
- Civic Clubs
- Banks
- Agricultural/Farmer Organizations
- Health Department (Local and State)
- Tennessee Department of Agriculture
- USDA (Rural Development and Natural Resources Conservation Service)



Attractive displays at farmers market are appealing to the market's customer.

CHAPTER 2 – Steps and Phases of Consideration and Development

The primary steps and phases involved in the consideration and development of a farmers market can be summarized as follows:

- Assessment of Interest
- Feasibility
- Organization
- Implementation
- Operation
- Continued Operation and Evaluation

The purpose of this chapter is to provide detailed guidelines on how to establish a farmers market and advice on how to operate the market once it is established.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide detailed guidelines on how to establish a farmers market and advice on how to operate the market once it is established. The chapter is comprised of three sections. The first section, “Interest and Feasibility,” provides detailed considerations when assessing interest and determining the feasibility of a community farmers market. The second section, “Organization and Implementation,” identifies potential organizational structures and outlines the implementation procedures to follow when trying to make a farmers market a reality. The third and final section, “Continued Operation and Evaluation,” discusses the day-to-day details of operating the market and how to evaluate its ongoing progress.

Each of these sections begins with a general outline of decision-making stages and concepts. The activities and concepts included in the general outline are then discussed in greater detail. Though not meant as a sequential list, check-boxes are conveniently provided to assist with planning and assessment of progress.

Interest and Feasibility

Outline of Stage 1: Assessment of Interest

The overall objective of Stage 1 is to develop a community consensus on the need or lack of need for the market. Specific goals to achieve in Stage 1 include:

- ☐ Organize a market study committee. Ideally, this committee should be made up of a diverse group including representatives from city and county governments, local business leaders, the Chamber of Commerce, farmers/growers, Extension, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and consumers.
- ☐ Define the purpose and type of market desired. There are various reasons to form a farmers market. These should be identified and considered. The size of the market also should be analyzed.
- ☐ Locate and identify potential areas of assistance and funding. The committee should explore the various local, state and federal funds available as grants or low-interest loans. Various philanthropic associations, business groups and civic organizations are also possible funding sources.

- ❑ Identify any individuals or group(s) that may oppose the market. Individuals or groups may oppose the formation of a market for various reasons. Typical areas of opposition are competing businesses and businesses that will share the same parking and service facilities.
- ❑ Establish general organizational policies, including a schedule of meeting times and general rules.
- ❑ Tours of existing market facilities deemed acceptable by the market study committee.

Outline of Stage 2: Feasibility

The overall objectives to be achieved in Stage 2 include the market study committee initiating detailed fact-finding regarding market characteristics, organizational structure, marketing management, financing, land-use planning and regulatory compliance. This general market research should:

- ❑ Identify the purposes of the market. The committee should have addressed the various purposes for establishing a market in Stage 1. Now committee members should be able to designate a specific purpose.
- ❑ Identify potential sponsors for the market. After compiling a list of various possibilities, overtures should be made to these groups to gauge their interest and the amount of support available. Possible sources include community groups, municipal or state governments, federal grants, low-interest loans or community fundraising. Sponsorship may include time, expertise, in-kind materials and financial support.
- ❑ Gather more information about potential opposition to the market. The intensity and reasons for opposition should be studied to develop solutions to lower this opposition. An important factor to consider is the projected economic, social and environmental impact of a farmers market on the surrounding community.
- ❑ Identify characteristics of the market. The committee must begin to address several issues, including how large the market will be, which type and origin of vendors (commercial versus small-scale growers; local versus regional growers) will be allowed to sell in the market, and whether non-grower vendors or non-food vendors will be allowed.
- ❑ Identify the organizational structure and market management alternatives. The committee should study the advantages and disadvantages of applicable organizational structures and then determine local market conditions. These structures can vary, and include nonprofit associations, farmers co-ops, a department under municipal government control, community group or an informal growers' association. Secondly, the type of market management through which to administer the market on a day-to-day basis (market manager) needs to be determined.
- ❑ Identify government and community issues. Appropriate government agencies should be contacted. The local zoning or planning commission should be contacted concerning possible sites and regulations. Health departments and other licensing or taxing agencies also should be contacted. Building codes, sales tax, liability insurance and rules and regulations for the market itself should be investigated. Another important factor is to determine the projected economic impact on the surrounding community.
- ❑ Identify financing alternatives. The amount of available and potential funding for the market should be ascertained and avenues of obtaining this funding should be pursued.



Farmers markets provide an efficient and effective retailing opportunity for farmers.

Farmers market can benefit the community by preserving neighborhoods and encouraging the retention of agricultural land near cities.

- ☐ Identify sources of potential technical assistance. Specialists with Extension, county Extension agents, Department of Agriculture marketing personnel, the local Chamber of Commerce and planning commissions are possible sources of assistance.
- ☐ Identify alternative site locations. Possible locations include downtown (central business district), sites adjacent to the downtown area and sites in surrounding suburban areas. Aspects of site selection that need to be considered include:
 - ☐ open site (small parking lot, park land, pedestrian mall, street)
 - ☐ covered (tent, pavilion, shed) with open sides
 - ☐ new enclosed building
 - ☐ renovation of older building
 - ☐ parking structure or surface space
 - ☐ accessibility and visibility
 - ☐ permanence
 - ☐ space needs for vendors, storage, parking, maintenance, market manager
 - ☐ neighborhood setting
 - ☐ costs of alternatives
 - ☐ local zoning regulations
- ☐ Identify publicity strategies and alternatives. Newspapers and newsletters, radio and TV advertising, flyers, postcards and site vicinity signs are viable forms of obtaining publicity for the market.

Detailed Discussion of Interest and Feasibility

The first step in establishing a farmers market is to explore the attitude of community leaders toward the idea and the need for a farmers market. It is essential in the formative stages to focus the attention of those involved in this process on attracting vendors (growers/marketers) and consumers of the potential products to be featured at the market. To determine the attitude of community leaders toward a farmers market, the initial step would be to organize a meeting of all those who have an interest in forming or may have direct interest in a farmers market. Groups that are frequently involved in such a meeting include:

- ☐ Farmers
- ☐ County or city officials
- ☐ County Extension agents and staff
- ☐ Department of Agriculture marketing personnel
- ☐ Local USDA officials
- ☐ Planning, zoning, highway and building code officials
- ☐ Civic clubs and churches
- ☐ Bank representatives
- ☐ Local produce dealers
- ☐ Farmer's cooperative representatives
- ☐ Health department officials
- ☐ Agricultural organization representatives

A list of people present at the organizational meeting should be compiled for future reference and contact. The purpose of this meeting should be to identify and organize those who have an interest in being actively involved in the leadership of forming a market. From those present at the meeting, a market study committee should be formed to investigate the issues of market formation.

A market study committee made up of community members who feel strongly about the realistic need for a farmers market can make the overall efforts more effective. Care should be taken in selecting this study committee, because the committee's individual qualifications will determine the direction, scope and character of the market. Many times the members of the study committee are the leaders of the market because of their knowledge of the needs and concerns of the community.

The market study committee should be representative of the entire community. Members could be growers, consumers, business owners, municipal officials or civic leaders. Committee members selected should be respected, fair-minded, enthusiastic and sound thinkers. Furthermore, they should have the approval and support of all of the concerned parties. Ideally, the committee should be made up of four or five members, but never more than eight because of the difficulty of reaching a consensus.

Market study committee should be representative of the entire community... growers, consumers, business owners, municipal officials or civic leaders.

After a market study committee is formed, a temporary chairperson and secretary should be selected to allow the committee to operate more efficiently. The chairman selected should be capable of moving the committee forward, while the secretary will keep a clear record for better communication and understanding. Responsibility for progress must be clearly assigned. If a timetable is developed with target dates and deadlines, those assigned responsibility will feel a commitment toward accomplishing goals. A written agenda of goals for the committee to accomplish, prior to reporting to the group as a whole, should be developed. The market study committee is responsible for gathering information to determine community interest. Questions that the study committee should consider include:

- ☐ Are there farmers/marketers interested in selling at a farmers market?
- ☐ Is there sufficient consumer demand to support the market if established?
- ☐ Is there a general consensus in the community that a farmers market is needed?
- ☐ Is there any opposition to the formation of a farmers market?
What are the objections to the market?
- ☐ Is there financial support for the market if it is not a profit center?

Other information that should be considered could come from leaders of past attempts to form a market or those involved with a previous market. These leaders may have suggestions and will be able to provide information about obstacles and problems that may present themselves. Also, there may have been some significant obstacle that still exists, or conversely, another area of support that had been previously overlooked. In addition, an inventory of farmers markets and roadside stands within 25 miles should be performed. These neighboring farmers markets should be visited and studied. Items to consider on these visits are the sponsoring agency, size, market rules and fee schedule.

Once these things have been accomplished, the committee is ready to address several other important issues and activities, including market research, purpose of the market, market sponsors, possible opposition to the market, characteristics of the market, business organization structure, urban planning, funding, site alternatives and publicity.

Market Research

The market planning committee should be prepared to undertake some organized market research to determine if there is a consensus among the community concerning the need for a farmers market. Conducting market research is the major function of the market study committee and normally signals the committee to develop some guidelines with respect to regular meeting times and procedures for the committee.

Market research is a vital step in the development of any farmers market. The greater the potential and proposed size of a market, the more essential it is to perform market research. Market research is used to identify and solve a marketing problem by a systematic and objective search for and analysis of information. Research is not a substitute for good management decisions, but a way of making better decisions through thorough information gathering.

Market studies and market surveys are the two basic types of research that can be performed. These differ in the way that information is gathered and the depth of the research. A market study is composed of data gathered from secondary sources such as government agencies and universities. It will contain relatively general information about markets studied in other cities or areas. A market survey, on the other hand, requires that data are gathered firsthand from potential customers and growers/marketers through personal interviews at markets, mail surveys, telephone surveys, etc. The information that is gathered in a market survey is much more specific than in a market study.

Thorough research is crucial in all stages of market formation.

Generally, a market study is used during the interest and feasibility stage, while a market survey is used during the organizational stages of the market. Thorough research is crucial to all stages of the market formation and operation. Any decisions and recommendations based on research should be put into writing and distributed to the market study committee.

Purpose of the Market

The next step for the market study committee is to determine the overall mission and operating purpose of the market. There are various common purposes for the formation of a market. Some of these purposes include being a magnet for traffic to a central business area, an outlet for locally grown produce and a source of high-quality produce for low-income consumers. Another reason might be the retention of agricultural lands near urban areas. The purpose of the proposed market should be decided and recorded.

Market Sponsors

Sponsorship is another issue that should be addressed. Potential sponsors or support groups could be from local government, the Chamber of Commerce, downtown retailers' associations, grower or consumer groups and federal grants. A farmers market must have a core group of growers/marketers and customers who are willing to sell and buy fresh produce on a regular basis, while at the same time have a sponsoring agency willing to continue supporting a market that serves the grower and consumer.

Opposition to the Market

As well as having members of the community who support the formation of a farmers market, there may be segments of the community who oppose it. Typical areas of opposition include competing businesses, businesses that surround the potential market sites and people unclear about the purpose and goals of the market. Sources of opposition should be identified and their complaints

addressed early on. Many times, opposing groups can have significant political impact with municipal governments, planning boards and business groups. If these problems are addressed early, often the problems can be defused before they become major obstacles to the formation of a market.

Characteristics of the Market

After two or more years of operation, the initial enthusiasm and drive that fueled the formation of the market often dwindles and leaves the market with great difficulty in sustaining operations.

An additional area of consideration for the market committee is the type of market to be established. The size (small versus large) of the market is one issue that needs to be addressed. A decision on market size may limit or accommodate the inclusion of large commercial growers, small part-time growers and non-produce vendors. Consideration of these different vendors raises the ultimate issue about who the market is for and the compatibility among vendors in a specific market. Another issue to address is whether the market will only allow local and non-local producers, as well as wholesalers. Many times, consumers would like to buy items such as citrus and bananas that cannot be grown locally. Alternatives are allowing marketers to bring in produce that can't be locally grown and charging a higher rent fee, or allowing growers to bring in produce from other areas on a rotating basis. The county Extension agents or various Extension horticultural specialists could be consulted about which types of produce can be grown locally. Lastly, some potential vendors may want to sell art and crafts or other goods. Some of these products may add additional value to primary agricultural goods through processing or alternative uses. A decision will have to be made regarding these products and their inclusion or exclusion from the market.

Organizational Structure

One difficult question facing those engaged in forming a farmers market is – which type of market organization and management structure should be established? The best organizational structure is one that will be supported by all of the market participants and result in a successful market. The organizational form generally is determined by the kind and extent of active support generated for the project and the type of facility. The organization should be viewed as a tool to accomplish pre-determined goals. Some goals might include determining:

- ☐ What the managing organization will do
- ☐ How much capital will be required
- ☐ Where capital will come from
- ☐ Who will control the organization
- ☐ Who the market will be organized around (the investor, marketers or the public)

Some options for organizing a farmers market include:

- ☐ An informal volunteer association
- ☐ A non-profit/profit-oriented association or cooperative
- ☐ A government-operated facility
- ☐ A privately owned market (individual, partnership)
- ☐ A general corporation

After two or more years of operation, the initial enthusiasm and drive that fueled the formation of the market often dwindles and leaves the market with great difficulty in sustaining operations. Unless the market eventually becomes a legally affiliated business association, is managed by a community group, is government-organized or becomes a corporate entity, its life beyond five years is questionable. A well-written set of bylaws oftentimes helps get a group of market leaders beyond discussions and into the details of organization. Bylaws

usually specify requirements for membership, how voting is conducted, duties of elected officers and other rules for the management and operation of the organization. Sample bylaws are presented in Appendix A.

Government and Community Issues

A farmers market is subject to state, county, regional and municipal laws, ordinances and regulations. The number of regulations can vary from few for an open-air, seasonal market to many for year-round markets in permanent facilities. Legal concerns and regulations increase as the marketplace and market become more sophisticated and diverse. Local zoning and planning commissions should be contacted concerning possible sites and regulations that might apply to the market. Other agencies to contact include local and state health departments (Department of Health, Food and Drug) and licensing and taxing agencies. Other regulations that might affect the market include building codes, sales tax and liability insurance.

Funding

Funding strategies vary from market to market. There is no set formula for acquiring financing. Financial requirements can vary according to the type of market, potential volume, goals and the structural organization. Potential sources of funding will want to know as much as possible about the proposed market. Federal and state grants also may require that the market be consistent with community economic and social goals, be profitable enough to repay the loan and/or revive a specific area. Leaders involved with planning local farmers markets are encouraged to contact the market development division of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture for possible funding sources for farmers markets in Tennessee.

The market study committee should look into all available sources of funding. Specific counsel and aid in grant writing are two important areas for the market study committee to consider. The source and amount of funds needed will have a significant impact on the potential success of the market.

Site Alternatives

Selection of a site for a farmers market involves several important considerations. Location is one of the most important factors determining the success of any enterprise. Several points impact site selection, including:

- ☐ Safety
- ☐ Visibility
- ☐ Expansion possibilities
- ☐ Cost
- ☐ Convenience
- ☐ Ease of public access
- ☐ Zoning regulations

Areas for potential sites include downtown areas, central business districts, areas adjacent to downtown or suburban areas. The neighborhood setting in which the market is to be placed can be a great help or hindrance. Heavily industrialized areas; sites next to bar districts; or dilapidated, rundown areas are not conducive to attracting business and making customers feel comfortable. The site and structure should also match the aesthetics of the area in which the market is located.



Farmers market locations should be convenient, safe and accessible.

Once the general area for the market has been selected, the general type of physical structure for the market is the next consideration. The market can be an open, covered or enclosed site. For example, common open sites are in small parking lots, at public parks, in a pedestrian mall or on a city street closed for the market. A second type is a covered site, which can be in the form of a tent pavilion or shed with open sides. A third option is an enclosed building. The building can either be new or a renovation of an existing structure. Local planning boards or commissions should be consulted for any zoning regulations.



On-site signs are good ways to inform the public about the market

The amenities of the facility can have a great impact upon the success of the market. The market must have some type of parking accommodations. Accessibility and visibility of the market will affect the number of customers it attracts. If it is not easy to enter and exit the market, customers will be discouraged because they cannot shop without making a special effort. A market that is not visible will not attract the attention of customers who frequent the area. The use of highly visible signs will attract customers who are not aware of the market from other publicity sources. The permanence of the market is important to its long-term survival. Switching sites from year to year can lead to confusion and loss of customers.

Space requirements vary from market to market depending on the size of the market, type of products, availability of public transport and days of operation. A large market with commercial growers will require access for large trucks, while smaller markets can be built to accommodate smaller vehicles. Markets that are open more than once a week may need cold-storage facilities to allow growers to store produce for the next market day. Another consideration is office space for the market manager and storage space for market records.

One of the last site considerations, but certainly not the least, is the cost and ownership of the property. The cost of purchasing or renting the land and any improvements or construction that are necessary also should be determined and considered during the decision-making process.

Publicity

The market study committee should contact the various types of media in the area. Newspapers, radio, TV and community and group newsletters should be approached about their willingness to provide publicity and public service announcements. Fliers, market logos and on-site signs are good ways to inform the public. The market study committee should contact the Department of Agriculture for information on available signage and promotional materials.

At the end of the interest assessment and feasibility phase, the study committee should review and analyze all of the information collected. Enough information should be available for the committee to make an informed decision as to the overall interest and feasibility of forming a farmers market.

Organization and Implementation

Outline of Stage 3: Organization

Goals to be achieved in Stage 3 include surveying potential marketers and customers, finalizing the type of organizational structure and assessing the market area of the intended farmers market. In this section, Parts 1 and 2 contain issues that should be solicited from growers and customers, respectively.

Market research is a vital step in the development of any farmers market.

Part 1 - Grower/marketer Information

- ☐ Level of interest in selling in proposed market
- ☐ Growers who presently sell in other outlets
 - ☐ operate roadside market
 - ☐ sell to roadside market
 - ☐ pick-your-own market
 - ☐ sell on wholesale market
 - ☐ sell at other farmers markets
- ☐ Number of acres of established producers and those planning to get into production
- ☐ Variety of products in a position to sell (specific crops) and the timing of their harvest and sale
- ☐ Stall rental preference (annual, semiannual, monthly, daily) and time of year desired
- ☐ Preferred days and hours of operation
- ☐ Type of market facility desired (indoor, partially enclosed, open stall with roof protection or open lot)
- ☐ Ranking of facilities and services considered important (rest rooms, pay phone, lunch or snack counter, paved parking, accessible unloading space for marketers near selling area)
- ☐ Number of potential “grower” marketers versus “buying from others” marketers
- ☐ Grower attitudes to allowing arts, crafts and other non-produce items for sale

Part 2: Customer Information

- ☐ Why do consumers attend certain markets? Which specific products will customers make a special effort to buy in-season?
- ☐ Product mix desired by consumers
- ☐ How did customer become aware of market?
- ☐ Where do customers currently buy produce?
- ☐ Preferred hours and days of shopping
- ☐ Facilities and types of services considered important
- ☐ Attitudes toward imported (non-local) produce
- ☐ Type of market facility desired

The committee should complete several things in Stage 3. Committee members should study and interpret information received from growers/marketers. A market site should be selected. Professional help in the areas of legal issues, accounting, management, planning, design and engineering, advertising and public relations should be retained. Also, a permanent market steering committee should be established to replace the market study committee in making decisions and establishing and operating the market. This new committee should begin to establish policies, goals, priorities and standards for the market.

Outline of Stage 4: Implementation

Goals to be achieved in Stage 4: Selection of organizational structure, site and funding sources; agreement on specific plans; and preparation for establishing the market. In this stage, the decisions from the earlier stages will be refined into a specific program of planning and establishing the market. The group should narrow down to one or two choices for financing, organization, management, legal matters, market design and publicity. Items to be resolved or identified include:

- ☐ Active support and participation of technical resource personnel, local government, the Chamber of Commerce, government agencies and others.
- ☐ Community awareness of the market.
- ☐ The organizational structure and its relationship to the sponsoring organization.
- ☐ This includes market management, rules and regulations in a draft form.
- ☐ Strategies for capital development and improvement as well as specific funding sources.
- ☐ The financial feasibility study should be ready.
- ☐ The committee should be aware of pertinent laws, health regulations, coding ordinances, licenses and liability insurance.
- ☐ Selection of a specific site.
- ☐ Consultants should be retained for site and structure design. Requirements for number of vendors, storage space and parking should be established for the building program.
- ☐ A specific public relations program, with a market logo, should be established.

The steering committee should begin to develop policies, goals, priorities and standards for the market.

Detailed Discussion of Organization and Implementation

Once the market study committee has carefully assessed the overall interest in a local farmers market and is convinced that the project is feasible and worthy of development, it should proceed with the organization and implementation phases. One of the first steps of transition into market organization and implementation is to replace the market study committee with a permanent market steering committee. The steering committee should begin to develop policies, goals, priorities and standards for the market. The new committee could be composed of the same members as the study committee, but the name change will help to focus attention on the new goals and directions for the market. The committee should serve as an overall advisory group to the management of the market.



Covered stands provide protection and shade for produce, vendors and customers

Information from potential customers and vendors is essential for the decision-making process by the steering committee. This information can be gathered by mail or telephone surveys. A mail survey is often the most effective method for reaching potential growers/marketers, while customers could be more effectively contacted by a telephone survey. Other tasks to be accomplished by the steering committee include the selection of the market site and retaining professional legal, financial, management, design and public relations help.

Surveying potential marketers and vendors will help make management better informed. Some alternatives in performing this research include contracting with market research firms, university groups or perhaps a municipal in-house staff to complete a survey of the market. However, it may be necessary to identify an



Farmers market booth should be neat, clean, well organized — need not be elaborate.

individual to take charge of preparing, conducting and summarizing the survey. There may be an opportunity to convince local experts to donate their time and expertise to the survey process. Two surveys will need to be performed: 1) a mail survey of potential growers-marketers (See Appendix B) and 2) a telephone survey of potential customers (See Appendix C).

A mail survey of growers/vendors is the most effective way of contacting this group. The questions for this survey can be oriented in two ways, depending on the lead time before the market opens. If the market opening is close, questions should be focused on locating growers definitely interested in the market. These people should be asked about the products they would have to sell, the quantities and a schedule of the dates the produce would be ready for sale. If the market opening is not imminent, the survey should focus on the general level of interest and experiences of marketers in other outlets. The success of the market depends heavily upon developing a core group of regular vendors interested in the market.

The county Extension agent and local USDA Farm Service Agency would be good sources of information on potential growers. Agricultural and horticultural specialists can identify the types of commercial vegetable and fruit crops, bedding plants, greenhouse products and other crops produced in the area. Also, farmer groups and organizations in the area should be kept informed about the market. In addition, in news stories about the market, a name with address and phone number should be given for those interested. Those responding could then be sent a survey.

The survey will be better received by growers if it is sent or signed by someone known and respected in the agricultural community. Pre-addressed return envelopes will help generate a higher response. A separate address card could be included for those who wish to receive news about the market as it develops. A survey carried out a full year ahead of the opening will provide a good indication of the interest in the proposed market, growers' experience in other outlets, acreage in production and what growers want in a market.

The grower/vendor survey should contain several areas of inquiry. The eight classifications of information that follow could be used as a method of breaking the survey down into short sections. If non-agricultural vendors are going to be included in the market, survey questions should address their needs as well.

- 1. Direct market outlets used in the past:** Did the grower participate in another farmers market or operate a pick-your-own or sell through a roadside market during the past year? Would the market be an outlet for a majority of his/her products or just for peak-of-season production excess? A nucleus of growers who have sold at a market before is a valuable addition to a new market in helping new marketers and managers.
- 2. Commercial fruit and vegetable acreage:** Is commercial production primarily fresh market vegetables, fruit or a combination? What are the sizes of the operations? Is the land currently in production or planned for the future? A market should have adequate supplies of both fruits and vegetables. A time period of three to five years is needed for fruit trees to produce. Thus, it may be necessary to obtain another source of fruit the first few years, if none is available locally.

3. **Stall rental:** Stalls can be rented on an annual, semiannual, monthly, weekly or daily basis. These are some of the options available, but every market does not offer all of these. Many new markets will rent on a daily or all-season rate, while some have seasonal, monthly and daily rates. Once the market becomes established, veteran marketers want a consistent location and will rent on a seasonal basis. Assignment can be made on a priority basis (i.e., seasonal, monthly or daily basis).
4. **Selling season:** The facility or building will affect whether or not the market will operate seasonally or year-round. A new market should plan to open for the first season when locally grown produce is available but before the peak period of seasonal supplies.
5. **Products to sell:** A variety of products and a selection of high-quality produce are what consumers demand. In the survey, make a check-list of products that might be sold for the farmer to check. Be sure to allow space to list other products that may not be included in the list. The primary purpose of this part of the survey is to gain information from the growers about the potential supply of fruits and vegetables that they can provide. During the first year of the market there may be uneven supplies of fruits and vegetables, while consumer demand may be hard to gauge.
6. **Days of week and hours of operation:** Saturday is usually the most popular day for growers-marketers. But, during the peak of the growing season, growers would usually prefer that the market be open at least two days. If growers are selling in other markets there will not be as great a demand to have more than one selling day. Most established markets will sell on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Hours of operation are generally determined more by growers than customers. Since many growers pick the produce and pack it the previous evening, they tend to prefer a morning market.
7. **Market services desired:** Potential growers/marketers will often have strong feelings about which type of services the market should provide. The committee could ask producers to rank the services they feel are necessary for a market. Commonly desired services include easy and accessible parking, pay telephones, snack bars, market office, refrigeration and cooler facilities, vending machines and restrooms.
8. **Source of produce:** The source of produce for the market is often a very important issue. Whatever decision is made must be acceptable to producers and consumers. Markets can allow only local producers who grow all that they market, or they can allow produce from other states and regions.



Farmers markets are a great place to offer customers a variety of products.

In addition to a large and committed group of vendors, the success of a farmers market also depends on whether a core of loyal customers can be established.

The number of vendors, type and location of facility and products/services that the market offers can be the difference between success and failure. Contacting the public through a consumer survey ahead of the opening will also raise community awareness.

A telephone survey is one way to poll consumers about interest in the market and their wants and needs. A mail or postcard survey may also be used, however. In some areas, a mail survey may be more appropriate if consumers are already responding to a number of telephone surveys. If a telephone survey is selected, it should be completed three to six months prior to opening so any overwhelming preference can be implemented in the market plans. Interviews should be scheduled for winter or early spring when there are no major conflicting events. Calls should be made between 6 and 9 pm on consecutive days; for example, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The interviews should be conducted from a central location. Four or five interviewers should be able to work at one time. Possibilities for volunteers include service groups, 4-H clubs and consumer education and marketing classes. All of the interviewers should have a clear voice devoid of strong accent or dialect and without rapid delivery.

A random sample of consumers to contact for the survey can be drawn from the telephone book. The size of the sample used will depend upon the degree of precision desired versus cost. A sample of 400 successful calls is the minimum required for a population of more than 10,000. A randomly selected sample will be more likely to have the different characteristics that make up the population as a whole. An acceptable method for drawing a sample is to start at the beginning of the telephone book and select every “nth” name.



Having a pleased customer is priceless.

Regardless of the type of survey, consumers should be surveyed on four topics. These topics should cover the range of items most important to consumers and include:

- 1. Level of interest:** Not everyone will be interested in a farmers market. Some people will refuse to answer survey questions, while others will be delighted. By using a random sample, a profile of residents from potential customers to those who will not patronize the market can be drawn. Persons who currently buy produce at roadside markets or pick-your-own operations are more likely to shop at a farmers market.
- 2. Site:** Customers are also concerned about the site or location of the market. Issues important to consumers include transportation time to the market, ease of entrance and exit and adequacy of parking. Two limitations that aggravate customers are lack of parking and traffic congestion – many customers will not return to a market if they have trouble getting to it and they have problems parking.
- 3. Variety and selection of produce:** Farmers markets enjoy the advantage of having several marketers selling similar products, offering consumers more choice than in a supermarket. However, consumers may demand the same selection and range of products that a grocery store offers. This leads to the question of what produce a market should offer. Do consumers want citrus, bananas and other produce in addition to what is locally grown? Others may think that only locally grown produce should be sold. The information gathered from the

survey will allow a decision to be made that meets customer expectations and the goals of the marketers and growers.

A budget statement should identify funding sources that will be used to offset market expenses.

4. Desired hours of operation: The season, days and hours of the market will be influenced by many factors. Year-round markets can operate only in enclosed buildings or facilities protected from the elements. Most seasonal markets will be open from May to October. In many first-year markets, the market will open just before the peak of the season. Saturday is the most popular day, with many markets opening in the middle of the week for an additional day. In the first year, a market is generally open only on Saturday. Hours of operation may vary, but marketers will prefer the morning, while customer preferences will vary. First-year markets may want to look at the operating schedules of other markets when setting their schedules.

With the information from the vendor and consumer surveys, an idea of the preferences of these two groups should be considered objectively and carefully as this may lead to the need to augment or change the plans for the farmers market in order to increase the likelihood of success. Once this information is assimilated, final plans should be made and implemented. A market site and structure, financial funding, legal assistance and public relations help should be selected or obtained.

A preliminary budget needs to be prepared for the implementation stage, even in the smallest of markets. The budget statement should identify all sources of funding that will be used to offset expenses. Since most expenses associated with market establishment will be incurred before the market opens, potential market revenues provide little assistance at this point.

Once the organizational structure, type of facility, location and the amount and sources of funding have been determined, rules and regulations for the market can be developed. Market rules can be developed as part of associational bylaws or as stand-alone procedures.

Continued Operation and Evaluation

Outline of Stage 5: Operation

Goals to be achieved in Stage 5 include the conversion of all of the previous research and study into more applicable forms of finance, organization, operational design, legal conformity and public relations. This stage should complete the following:

- ☐ Financing is put into action.
- ☐ The site is approved and the structure constructed. Approval of site and building plans by local government should be followed by preparation of working drawings and specifications. Then bids are let and contracts awarded. With the issuance of permits and licenses, construction can begin.
- ☐ A market manager is hired, and the administration of all rules and regulations is begun.
- ☐ The public relations campaign should be in full operation.

Outline of Stage 6: Continued Operation and Evaluation

In this stage the market has already opened and management is in control of finances, planning, legal matters, design and public relations. Now that the market is in operation, a new responsibility is that of evaluation and continued improvement. The goal of Stage 6 is to use the information that comes from evaluation procedures to help management better understand who the marketers and customers are and identify their changing needs. Open communication channels will improve the market operation. This information is different for a first-year market and an established market. Some information that will be useful as the market leaders and management pursue continued evaluation and improvement includes:

First-year market information

- ☐ Number of weeks that growers sold produce.
- ☐ Good and bad experiences of vendors selling at the market.
- ☐ Types of products sold.
- ☐ Income data (if available).
 - ☐ Average gross weekly sales
 - ☐ Percent of gross sales from products derived from market sales
 - ☐ Percent of total yearly income derived from market sales
- ☐ Suggestions for changes and improvements.
- ☐ Grower plans for production next season. This includes the estimated amounts of specific fruits and vegetables to be available during the season, and the dates they are likely to be available.
- ☐ Community awareness of the new market. Prior to the second year of operation, determine the community's level of awareness of the market. This can provide feedback to measure the effectiveness of the promotional campaign. Questions that should be asked include:
 - ☐ Level of community patronage
 - ☐ Age, income, size of household
 - ☐ Why those aware of market didn't patronize
 - ☐ Factors that would encourage non-shoppers to patronize



Farmers market provides an efficient retailing opportunity for farmers.

Established Market Information

- ☐ Profile of farmer/marketers.
 - ☐ Years selling in the market
 - ☐ Distance marketers live from market
 - ☐ Number of stalls rented
- ☐ Classification of farmers/marketers.
 - ☐ Full-time farming
 - ☐ Part-time farming
 - ☐ Income from resale of farm products, crafts and other non-produce
 - ☐ Types of products sold
- ☐ Other outlets used during current year.
 - ☐ Roadside market
 - ☐ Pick-your-own
 - ☐ Another farmers market
 - ☐ Marketing organization
 - ☐ Wholesale market
- ☐ Changes, if any, in the volume of products sold in the market in the last 3 years.
- ☐ Changes in gross dollar sales in the last 3 years.
- ☐ Plans for expansion in the next 5 years.
- ☐ Do you feel your selling is hurt by any of the following?
 - ☐ Physical facility and parking

- ☐ Rules, regulations and policies
- ☐ Traffic flow through the market
- ☐ Amount of advertising and promotion of the market
- ☐ Lack of customers at the market

Detailed Discussion of Operation and Evaluation

The operation and evaluation stages are the culmination of all the study, research and planning. The market will take solid shape in the areas of finance, organizational structure, operational design, legal conformity and public relations using previous work as a blueprint for establishing and operating a market. At this point, financing should be put into action. The source of funding should be contacted and an operating line of credit or bank account established to pay for operating expenses. The site and structure should be approved by local government. Building codes, zoning ordinances and other municipal regulations should be checked. The preparation of working drawings and specifications is a prelude to the letting of bids and awarding of contracts for new construction or remodeling. Once the contracts are awarded, and all ordinances and regulations are met, construction can begin. Three of the more time-consuming activities of the operation and continued evaluation stages of farmers market development involves the day-to-day market operation through a market manager, advertising and promotion and conducting market evaluation surveys. Each of these three areas is described in more detail in the following pages of this chapter.



A vendor might also serve as the market manager.

Market Manager

A market manager should be hired to prepare and operate the market. In some cases, the market will not need a full-time manager and can operate with a part-time or volunteer manager. The manager will be responsible for various duties during operating and non-operating hours. The manager will be responsible for coordinating and supervising all aspects of the market. The board of directors or governing body of the market will set market policies, goals and standards and the manager will be responsible for implementing these policies, achieving goals and maintaining standards. While the market is in operation, the manager will be responsible for:

- ☐ Maintaining a working knowledge of all market rules and regulations, codes and ordinances.
- ☐ Obtaining adequate liability and general insurance policies.
- ☐ Recruiting and registering vendors (Appendix D contains a sample vendor application form).
- ☐ Monitoring Food Stamp and WIC nutritional programs.
- ☐ Obtaining all necessary permits and licenses for market operations.
- ☐ Developing and implementing safety programs and emergency procedures.
- ☐ Enforcing market rules and regulations.
- ☐ Managing vendor fees and payments for the market.
- ☐ Assigning stall spaces and overseeing their use.
- ☐ Maintaining and storing signs, stands, booths, etc.
- ☐ Supervising and assigning duties as necessary.
- ☐ Ensuring compatibility and cooperate among vendors.

When the market is not in actual operation, the manager will have a different set of duties. The manager will be responsible for:

- ☐ Attending all Board of Directors meetings.
- ☐ Preparing reports on market operations as required.
- ☐ Controlling all monies of the market according to budgets.
- ☐ Preparing an annual market report to members/growers.

- ☐ Acting as the market representative with county, state and city officials.
- ☐ Preparing an annual calendar and implementing advertising and promotional plans.
- ☐ Supervising, training and evaluating other staff members.

Needless to say, the market manager will have a responsibility for a broad spectrum of items, and the manager selected must be capable of handling these diverse duties. In addition, there are some common pitfalls of a market that a manager should be aware of.

An effective advertising and promotional campaign can help build an image of high-quality products at reasonable prices.

A lack of either buyers or sellers will cause the other group to abandon a market. Producers who are unwilling to work together or within market rules and regulations will cause rifts in the market. Growers must be willing to take the time to prepare their products for the market and to market them properly.

The manager can also be a cause for market failure if he/she is unwilling to enforce rules or make judgments as to day-to-day activities. For example, poor sanitation can be a quick way to make a market fail. Another cause of market failure can be loss of control of the organization to individuals unconcerned with the wants and needs of growers and consumers.

Advertising and Promotion

The management must make sure that adequate response is being obtained from advertising and promotional activities of the market. If the budget for advertising and promotion is small, markets have several options. Many times markets can come up with innovative and creative solutions on the local level to raise interest with little money. Some radio stations will make public service announcements and some television stations have public access or community news programs that are available to institutions such as farmers markets. Newspapers often have community news, consumer news and food sections or columns that can provide information about the market. In conjunction with such advertising efforts, a market can use various promotional activities to enhance community interest. Also, postcards, e-mail blasts, flyers and brochures properly distributed in the local community can be effective.

An effective advertising and promotional campaign can help the market build an image that conveys several things to consumers. First, it can build an image of high-quality products at reasonable prices. Second, it can foster an image of farmers growing the crops and bringing them to market. Even if the market is large and deals with consumers, wholesalers and retailers, it is valuable to maintain or cultivate the image of a farmer in the minds of consumers.

Once the market is operating, management must begin a process that will continue the life of the market. The market manager and board of directors must evaluate the success, progress toward market goals and the direction of the market. Managers must know who their vendors and customers are and what their needs are, and establish a communications channel. This process will be different for a market in its first year than for an established market. A first-year market will be more concerned with the current profile of growers/vendors and changes or improvements that can be made.

Evaluation Surveys

A mail survey could be used to follow up on the experiences of marketers/vendors after their first year in the market. Information that management

should collect includes the number of weeks (days) growers sold produce in the market, the types of produce sold, good and bad experiences, suggestions, income data and growers' plans for the next year. The income data, if possible, should include average gross weekly sales, percent of gross sales derived from market sales and the percent of growers' total income derived from market sales. The number of acres in production, types of produce and dates of produce availability for the next season also should be assessed (see Appendix E).

Community awareness of a new market will be an indicator of the success of the advertising and public relations efforts. To determine customer satisfaction with the market, personal interviews of customers should be performed during market hours. Customers should be asked their opinion of market facilities and produce quality and price, and likes and dislikes about the market. Customers also should be given an opportunity to make suggestions concerning the market and growers. The interviewers should try as much as possible to get a good sampling of the patrons at the market. The interview should be conducted during the peak or just after the peak of the season when the market will be the most active and have the most patrons. A sample personal interview questionnaire for customers during the market operation is available in Appendix F.

After successive years of operation, this market evaluation will evolve into a more specific type of information-gathering process. Information collected from growers by mail will become more detailed and will attempt to track sales and production. These surveys will help develop a profile of growers/marketers, other outlets used, changes in sales, production in the past and future, and feelings on factors affecting the market. This information should be compiled and used by the market manager and the governing body of the market to determine how the market is serving the needs of the growers/vendors and meeting the expectations of consumers.



Personal interviews with market vendors is a great way to obtain survey data and get input from vendors.

CHAPTER 3 – Location and Facility Considerations

Location plays a direct role in the number of customers who will shop at the market.

Numerous factors should be considered when searching for a location for a farmers market. Selection of an appropriate market site is just as important for a farmers market as it is for other retail businesses. In fact, farmers market organizations often compete with other businesses and government agencies for desirable locations.

Location plays a direct role in the number of customers who will shop at the market, because many customers will visit a farmers market based on convenience and the fact that they are just traveling by the market. While some customers will go out of their way to shop at a farmers market, long-term market success more often has a good balance of dedicated shoppers and those who are convenience-oriented. One location measure, average-daily-traffic counts, is often considered, but should not be the only factor evaluated when looking for a farmers market site.

Previous farmers market experiences support the notion that it is more important to locate a market close to and convenient for a large number of customers rather than in close proximity to producers and vendors. Despite the common and preferred use of personal automobiles, customers still report traveling very short distances to shop at farmers markets. In fact, most shoppers at farmers markets travel well under 10 miles, while some markets report the average distance traveled by customers to be less than 6 miles.

Vendors, on the other hand, will often travel an hour or more to sell at a farmers market. The size of the market and distance traveled by vendors are positively related. That is, as the number of shoppers at a market increases, so do the miles vendors are willing to travel to sell at the market.

An ideal physical location, however, is not the only factor that should be considered. The most desired location may have inadequate parking, zoning that restricts expansion and no utilities. While the development of many farmers markets have been a part of larger community and economic development projects, some markets have experienced displacement from ideal sites in the midst of larger community renewal projects when the land comes under pressure for higher-valued uses.

The early years of a farmers market start-up may be defined by making the best of a less-than-desirable location.

The early years of a farmers market start-up may be defined by making the best of a less-than-desirable location. Whether it is rental, purchase or site improvements, costs are often a limiting factor with site selection. Oftentimes the ultimate decision comes down to property that is made available by a sponsoring agency or someone involved with the leadership of the market. Start-up markets often get started in open lots and then, once established, look for more permanent locations with added amenities.

The following are potential sites that may serve as temporary locations for farmers markets:

- Athletic fields
- Parking lots (church, bank, city, county, school, shopping center)
- Church yards
- Fairgrounds
- Public parks
- Courthouse square
- Schoolyards
- Vacant lots

Selecting a site for a farmers market is often a complicated issue. Appendix G contains a sample site-review sheet for a farmers market. Many of the precise characteristics that should be considered when looking for a farmers market site are categorized into the following:

- Location
- Structures
- Utilities
- Parking
- Amenities (security, seating, restrooms, good lighting, snack bar)

Location

Location is one of the most highly debated characteristics of a farmers market. Location is the source of much friction before a market is established and long after it is in operation. Location is a pivotal characteristic for costs, customer traffic, safety, security and ultimately market success. Like most retail establishments, a farmers market will benefit from being conveniently located to a sizeable population. This is important for both regional as well as local placement of a farmers market. The need for a sizeable population does not mean that small towns cannot support a farmers market – it simply means that being located closer to more people is better. A drive greater than 10 miles to a farmers market may discourage some repeat customers unless there are other leisure or shopping opportunities nearby. This is not to suggest that only the highest traffic corners downtown will work for a market. “Off-the-beaten-path” locations can work, although extra effort and longer time-frame may be needed.

The old rule-of-thumb that advises to “estimate, then double” often pays off when looking for adequate space for a farmers market. Many markets fail to consider room for later expansion. A site for a farmers market should accommodate future expansion for both the facility/structure and parking. Too many markets have expanded facilities at the expense of parking, which tends to become counter-productive. An expanded facility for the purpose of increasing business without additional parking is often disastrous.

In addition to a good location, potential market sites should also provide good visibility of the market. Markets are often in good locations but lose potential customers because the market cannot be easily seen. An attractive and well-populated market will pull customers in – but only if they can see it. Bright colors, neat and fresh landscaping, and attractive signage are added positive features.

Accessibility is an important factor of both safety and convenience. How customers enter and exit the market grounds is a significant part of the overall



As is the case with the Warren County Farmers Market in McMinnville, attractive walkways can tie a farmers market to local retail shops and downtown revitalization projects.

market experience. If customers have trouble finding or seeing the entrance or if the exit is located in a dangerous position, the overall experience at the market is weakened.

One issue that sometimes gets overlooked when considering market locations is zoning and building ordinances. Even when local officials are involved with the planning of a local market, zoning issues must be carefully investigated. In addition to possible land-use zones, other examples of issues often subject to local regulations include building size, signage, driveway connections, toilet facilities, drainage, parking and construction.

In addition, good drainage is an important aesthetic, safety and functional factor of a farmers market. Muddy parking and pedestrian areas are displeasing to shoppers and often cause safety issues for both auto and foot traffic. Paved and asphalt areas have surface benefits but also increase runoff problems.

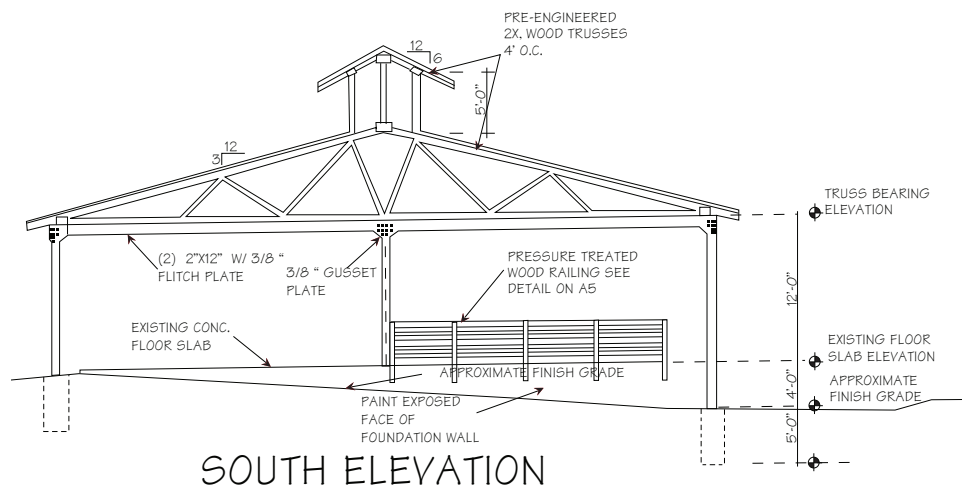
It is important for market planners to realize that many features of potential market sites cannot be changed. However, some ideal market features should not be sacrificed simply because the options are limited. Market planners are encouraged to carefully evaluate the pros and cons of possible locations and make comparisons on various features.

Structure

Structures and facilities at farmers markets can often be used as an indication of the market's overall maturity. Relatively young markets often operate without any dedicated structures or facilities. New markets frequently operate in open lots without any cover or in temporary locations while using the facilities of others. Some markets succeed without ever having the convenience of structures or facilities dedicated to the market's exclusive use. However, many vendors and managers aspire to specific market facilities. Structures themselves vary significantly from a covered shed to a completely enclosed and climate-controlled building with full utility accommodations. Oftentimes farmers markets operate as secondary occupants in facilities that are primarily for other functions, such as a fairground pavilion, picnic shelter or livestock exposition arena. Totally enclosed facilities constructed exclusively for farmers markets are not common because they do not accommodate display or access from truck beds. Covered structures with open sides and a distance of 8 to 12 feet between poles seem to accommodate farmers markets best.

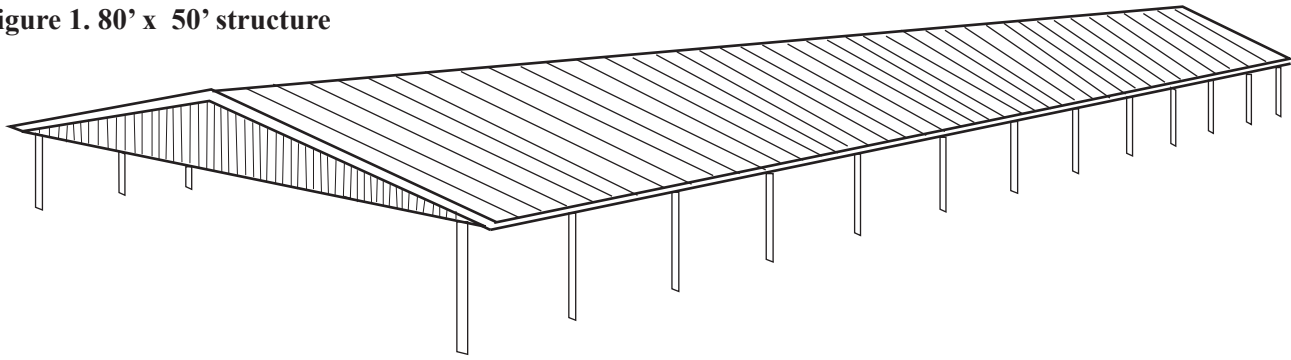


Structures used for farmers markets vary significantly.



* not to scale

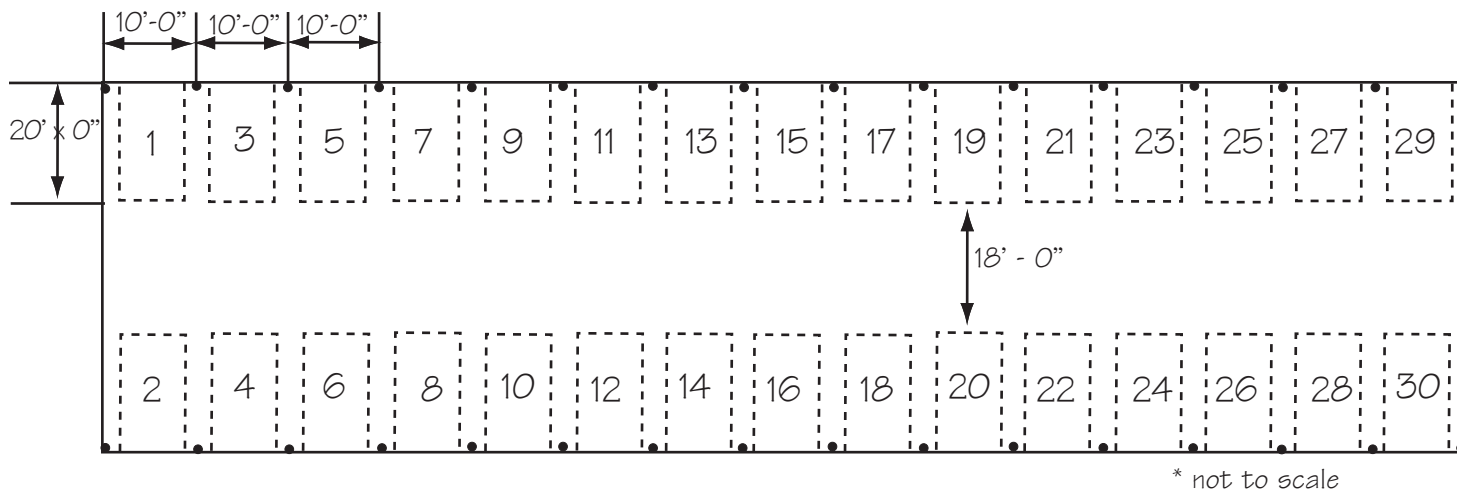
Figure 1. 80' x 50' structure



Market layout

One feature of farmers markets that is unique to individual markets is the rationale, or lack thereof, of how the flow of the market is designed. For outside or open-lot markets, the overall parameters are established by the vendor stalls and the lanes between them. For markets with covered structures, the basic parameters of market layout are provided by the dimensions of the facility (Figure 1) and the individual vendor stalls (Figure 2). For example, a facility that is 80 feet long by 60 feet wide would accommodate two rows of eight stalls that are 10 feet wide by 20 feet long and a 18-foot wide lane between the rows.

Figure 2. 80' x 58' facility with 10' x 20' wide lane



The actual market layout will vary as other unique market features are considered. If bathroom facilities, concession stand, sitting areas or office areas are included in the market, the flow around them should be considered.

Some markets also assign vendors to stalls based on the types of product they are selling. Interestingly, some markets try to group like products close together, while other markets try to have like products evenly dispersed throughout the market.

Stall spaces (dimensions) should be clearly and permanently marked. A numbering system for the stalls is a good practice that promotes clear communication when stalls are assigned to specific vendors.

Ventilation

During the hottest days of the summer, temperatures at farmers markets can become uncomfortable for vendors and consumers as well as posing product safety quality issues. Some markets address the heat by modifying hours of operation and opening the market earlier in the morning. However, opening earlier does not always please customers or vendors. Many markets influence hot days with well-insulated construction and a unique ventilation (using fans, construction design and roof type).

Size of market

Identifying the ideal size of a market structure has proven to be a tricky issue for many markets. This situation is often most complicated for new markets that are constructing a facility but have no previous market history. Again, the size of a specific market facility will depend greatly on the unique characteristics of the local market. The primary factors to consider when trying to identify an appropriate-size facility for a farmers market are:

- History
- Number of expected vendors
- Resident population
- Other uses for the facility
- Funding



Different areas at a farmers market can be used to designate certain products or certain vendor characteristics. At the West Tennessee Farmers Market in Jackson, an entire shed is devoted to “Tennessee-Grown Produce Only.”



Covered farmers market facilities come in a variety of styles and structures.

Prior history of a local market can be a great help in planning for expansion into a new facility. While a market's history is a great indicator of the number of vendors to expect, market planners should not overlook other methods of evaluating the potential for expected vendors such as producer meetings and surveys. The resident population should also be considered when sizing a new facility. While population numbers can be a confusing indicator of potential customer traffic, population comparisons with other communities with farmers market facilities can be a helpful indicator. If a facility will support uses other than a farmers market, the needs of other potential uses should also be considered. Finally, and oftentimes the most limiting factor, funding for a market facility must be considered. Funding is often a chicken-or-the-egg situation in that it may be limited but still flexible based on the justifiable size needed.

Utilities

Available utilities vary significantly from one market to another. Available utilities range from none at all to a full complement of water, communications, electricity, sewer and gas. Water is a positive attribute for cleaning, sanitation and restroom facilities, while electricity is a positive feature at a market for lighting, heating and cooling, and security. If the market will have an office on-site, various communication infrastructure will be a plus. Even with the widespread use of cellular telephones, a hard-wired telephone should be considered at the market. If refrigerated storage is needed at the market or if an on-site snack-bar or restaurant is needed, electrical supply will be essential. Electrical capacity and service types should be investigated carefully.

While the leadership of many would-be farmers markets often dreams of dedicated facilities and full utilities, the maintenance and on-going funding for such amenities should also be considered. Because many farmers markets are seasonal events and often go unused during the winter months, the cost of winterizing and securing facilities and utilities during the off season should not be overlooked.

Parking

Successful farmers markets are characterized by lots of traffic – both foot traffic and vehicle traffic. The ground surface at a farmers market should be given significant consideration. Paved, asphalt or well-graveled drives, walkways and parking areas offer lots of amenities during inclement weather and improve safety. Well-drained locations are beneficial and flat locations offer more advantages than slopes.

Ample parking should be provided as close to the market as possible without sacrificing safety. Market managers and vendors alike report that parking has a major impact on sales once shoppers get to the market. Many vendors report that shoppers who have to walk a long distance from the market with their purchases do not buy as much and do not return to the market as often.



Safe and well-marked pedestrian walkways in parking lots leading to the market are helpful.

Parking areas should be well-marked, well-drained, safe and adequate. If possible, parking areas on the same level as the market are preferred. This accommodates easy movement to and from the market for both vendors and customers and decreases the need for ramps and steps.

Reserved parking spaces for disabled customers are suggested. Federal law mandates one handicapped parking space for every 50 (or less) parking spaces provided¹. Designated parking spaces for the disabled should be clearly marked and safely located near the market and flat, hard-surfaced walkways.

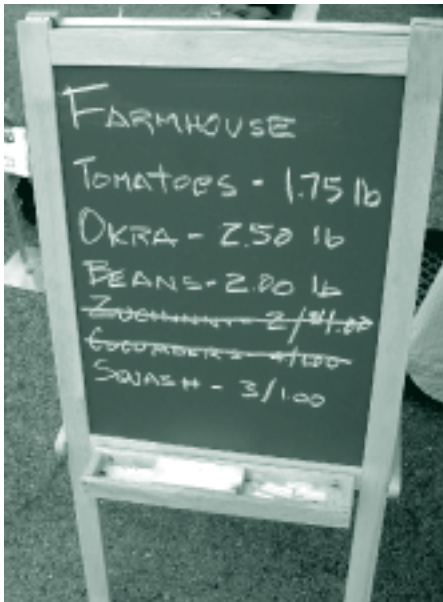
There are various rules-of-thumb to estimate the number of parking spaces needed at a market. One such rule suggests 15 parking spaces for each 100 cars you expect in a day. Another rule calls for one parking space for each \$100 in daily sales expected. Another estimate calls for three parking spaces for each vendor space, while another estimate is based on the size (square footage) of the market and suggests 4 square feet of parking space for each square foot of sales area. In this case, a 2,000 square-foot market would need 8,000 square-foot parking lot.

The size of individual parking spaces will vary from market to market. Spaces that are 10 feet by 18 feet will accommodate most automobiles. However,

¹Facilities for Roadside Markets, pg. 17.



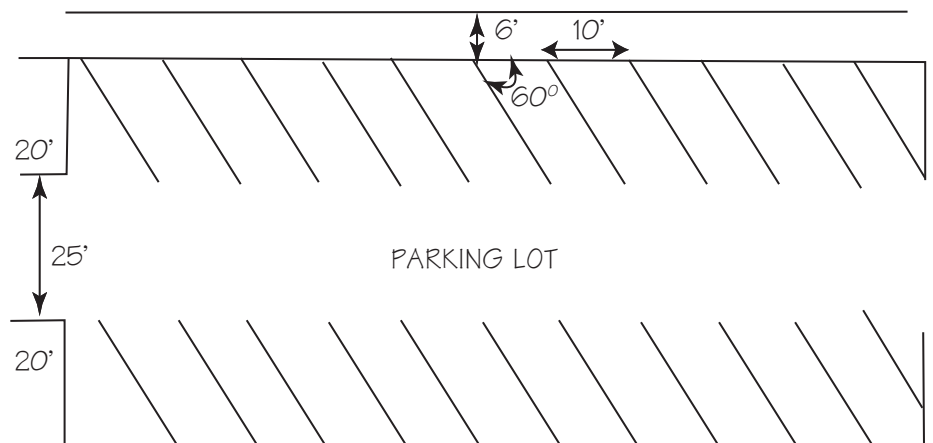
Attractive, well-landscaped and close parking is a great benefit to a local farmers market.



Chalkboards are an effective way for vendors to clearly mark prices to enhance the farmers market atmosphere.

angled parking spaces may be smaller. The width of aisle lanes will vary depending on the specific design of parking spaces (parallel, angle or straight). Driving lanes that are 22 to 24 feet wide are most accommodating. Angled parking spaces may allow for more narrow driving lanes. In addition to providing an adequate number of parking spaces, attention should be given to lanes, curbs, turning, backing, entry and exit. A sample parking lot diagram is provided in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Sample parking lot diagram



Other Amenities

Seating

Some type of seating tends to help legitimize the social atmosphere of a farmers market. Picnic benches, bleachers, checker tables or folding chairs are just a few examples of seating that can permit vendors to take a break and provide shoppers with a place to rest and visit. While seating can provide a positive market attribute, storage of seating materials during the off-season must be considered.

Safety and Security

Consideration should be given to the security of a farmers market facility out-of-season and at night. Like other public spaces, farmers markets often attract various types of loitering at night and during non-market seasons. Some means of securing the market and limiting access should be considered. The specific location of the market has a direct relation with safety as well.

Landscaping is an essential part of an attractive market but should be designed and installed so that it does not block views for safety. Keep in mind that lighting is a functional asset to a market as well as one of the best safety devices available. Well-lit areas are safe for vendors and customers and are good deterrents for loiterers and unwelcome guests in the off-season or when the market is closed.

Market management and leadership should conduct a regular walk-through of the market and try to observe potential improvements to maximize safety for customers and vendors. Appendix H provides a sample safety checklist for farmers markets. In addition, each vendor should be asked to identify and report any safety issues to the management.

Access and signage

Customers must be able to safely enter the marketing grounds and park without blocking or being blocked by other vehicles. If parking is too congested, not only will some customers decide not to visit the market, but others may find themselves parking in unsafe locations and walking in unsafe traffic conditions.



Directional signage helps improve a customers overall experience at a farmers market.

Previous studies have shown a positive relationship between the number of signs and sales at farmers markets. Both directional signs that help direct customers to the market and point-of-purchase signs in the market have proven benefits. A consistent theme should be established with the primary market sign, which normally has the market name and logo on it. The theme can then be used in other signage and markings related to the market. For instance, directional signs to the market, entrance and exit signs, parking signs, banners and other market announcements can use the overall market theme. Signs should not be wordy, busy or distracting. Messages on signs should be clear and concise.

Restrooms

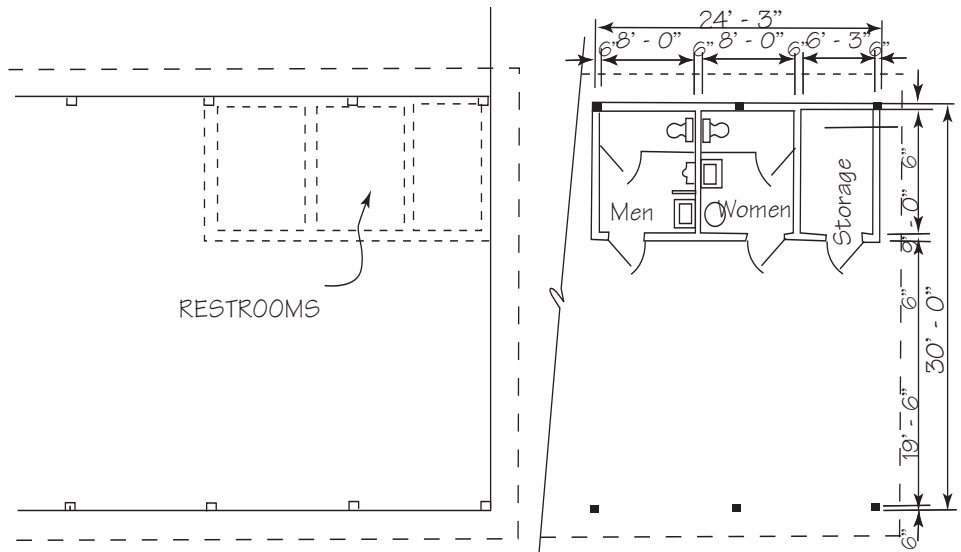
Restrooms are a major consideration for a farmers market both from a vendor and customer standpoint. While restroom facilities will positively accentuate a

customer's experience at a farmers market, access to restrooms is a necessity for the vendors who may be present at the market for hours. Temporary restroom accommodations may be made with nearby retailers, other businesses or portable facilities. However, long-term market viability usually mandates more permanent restroom facilities (Figure 4).



Bathroom facilities are an essential feature for a farmers market.

Figure 4. Sample restroom diagram



Lighting

Indoor and outdoor lighting can make a major contribution to a farmers market. Indoor lighting helps in the presentation of fresh products, increases the hours of market operation and improves safety. Outdoor lighting increases visibility for the market, improves safety and pleases customers. Despite the many benefits of lighting, the costs of providing such should be carefully considered. Bulb type, efficiency, wiring requirements, design, output and codes must all be addressed. Many vendors will arrive at the market to prepare their stall before daylight, so sufficient lighting is essential. Also, well-lit areas will help discourage vandals and unauthorized visitors.

CHAPTER 4 – Policies and Operating Guideline

For some markets, success or failure hinges on the rules and guidelines established and enforced. Undoubtedly written information that expresses desires and guides those involved with the market is helpful. Such information may be presented in a variety of fashions. For example, some information that contributes to the overall operation and function of a farmers market may be available in the organizational papers (articles of incorporation, charter, bylaws), while a set of operating guidelines and market rules may address additional matters.

Regardless of the format or heading, written policies that are reasonable, followed and enforced are often a key to success for a farmers market. However, it is important to realize that there is a strong relation between a market's policies and its management. Good policies cannot offset poor management and strong management cannot rectify bad policies.

When a new farmers market is created, it is up to the leadership of the organization to develop a written framework for its operation. Some markets have a written set of bylaws and a distinct set of operating guidelines and market rules. Other markets function well with a detailed set of bylaws that include specific market rules. The decision of whether to develop separate or inclusive bylaws, guidelines and rules must be made on a market-by-market basis. Some markets prefer to develop market rules each year and find that such regular changes are easier to make by having rules separate from the organizational bylaws. Other markets feel that having the market rules contained as part of the organizational bylaws provides an additional level of authority.

Oftentimes, documentation such as articles of incorporation, charter and bylaws will be developed for the overall organization, in which case such items will describe the overall creation and function of the organization as a business entity. For example, a "county farmers marketing association" might be organized as a legal entity and charged with the leadership and direction of enhancing local marketing opportunities for farm products. The articles of incorporation, charter and bylaws for this organization would focus on the mission, objectives, membership, officers, meetings, elections and so forth for the association. As an organization, the association might then develop a set of operational guidelines and rules for the operation of the farmers market.

It is important to realize that written rules, policies and guidelines for a farmers market should be the result of significant thought and consideration from the market leadership rather than simply trying to modify a list of generic rules or the rules from another market.

Regardless of which forms are used to document the guidelines of a market, rarely will a generic set of rules apply to a specific market. A good set of operating guidelines often results from the needs of a particular market and the circumstances and situations that make it unique. That is, a market's policies and guidelines should reflect the issues pertinent to the specific market and its unique characteristics. It is important to realize that written rules, policies and guidelines for a farmers market should be the result of significant thought and consideration from the market leadership rather than simply trying to modify a list of generic rules or the rules from another market.

Additional information on organizational documents and operational guidelines, including a sample list of market rules, is provided in the following section. Sample farmers market bylaws are included in Appendix A for example purposes only. These samples are not intended to serve as the actual bylaws and rules for any specific market.

Organizational documents

In many cases, a farmers market is operated by a farmers association, a government committee or another organization of some type. Oftentimes, a farmers market will need a set of written documents to describe the function, charge and mission. When the organization is created as a legal entity, articles of incorporation, a charter and a set of bylaws may be needed. Bylaws are written to describe the legal existence and operation of the organization. Bylaws for a farmers market will define the organization and describe its purpose, ownership, leadership and management. Bylaws can also define various membership classifications in the organization and the establishment and function of committees. The bylaws may or may not contain information about the market's location and broad operational procedures. In comparison to written rules and operation guidelines, the bylaws will be broad descriptions of the organization as an entity rather than a set of rules for the operation of the day-to-day market activities. Among many items, organizational documents will likely include a statement of purpose and objectives, committees, officers, staff/management, finances, dissolution, name/logo and amendments. In essence, organizational papers should provide documentation of the creation of the organization and should provide written direction for its operation.



Farmers markets should be well maintained throughout the year.

The organizational documents of a farmers market should contain a strong statement of purpose. For example, the statement of purpose may identify that the market is developed as a partnership between, for example, local and state governments, Chamber of Commerce, tourism, Main Street organizations, farmers' associations and Extension. The statement of purpose may go on to specify that the market is intended for the benefit of farmers and consumers alike with a two-fold mission – to provide the community with an opportunity to buy fresh, local farm products direct from producers in a friendly, family-oriented environment and to provide local farmers with a venue for direct-marketing farm products to consumers. Additional objectives of the market might include education and community enhancement.

Operational guidelines

Operational guidelines can be thought of as the policies and rules that guide the actual operation of the market. These are often updated each year and include dates, hours, location of operation and vendor fees. They should be easy to understand, printed and distributed to all vendors. They should be fair, enforceable and consistently applied; protect the market; and benefit the vendors.

Rules established for a market are critical to day-to-day operations and to long-term success. Rules should not be randomly adopted, and the temptation to simply use the rules from another market should be strongly resisted. Market rules should not exist just to meet legal requirements. They should be developed with considerable thought to the real needs and circumstances of the specific market and its vendors.

Rules establish an operating framework for the market and help define and clarify the overall mission and objectives. Rules are also an important legal process in that they become part of the agreement between the market and the vendor. Reviewing a set of rules from a farmers market can help understand the market.

The precise rules that will be needed for a particular market will depend on the history, experiences and needs of that specific market. The rules will also depend on the purpose and objectives of the market including the management and organization details. Policies and operating guidelines for a farmers market are often as unique from one market to another as the market's location. Rules and guidelines of a farmers market do not replace legal requirements regarding food processing, sales tax, packaging, weights and measures, and product labeling. Similarly, rules and guidelines do not replace a vendor's personal responsibility for safety nor negate liability.



Even though each individual market should develop a set of rules that meet specific local needs rather than adopting a generic set of rules, several common issues that should be considered in the development of written policies. When developing a set of market rules, market leaders should plan to address the following issues:

- Hours, dates and location
- Vendor residence
- Home-grown and resale products
- Products allowed
- Display and merchandising
- Food products, beverages, meat products and animals
- Crafts, hand-made goods, plants and trees
- Stall fees, equipment, vendor permits, sales reports and payments
- Sharing stall space, multiple stalls and vendor parking
- Punctuality, cancellation and dress code
- Quality assurance issues
- Signage, sales methods and pricing
- Set-up, take-down and clean-up
- Electricity, weights and measures
- Radios, pets and smoking
- Market manager
- Liability, food regulations and labeling
- Membership, grievance policy and failure to comply

For example purposes, a sample set of market rules is included as Appendix I.

CHAPTER 5 – Other Operating Issues

Most of the important issues, obstacles and opportunities faced by farmers markets have been introduced and addressed in previous chapters. There are a few issues, however, that have not been adequately addressed and are included here with a brief discussion. These include:

- Assignment of vendor booth space
- Acceptable products
- Merchandising
- Promotion/advertisements
- Special events
- Credit cards
- Sales tax
- Market maintenance
- Equipment and utilities
- Food regulations for vendors
- Certified scales
- Meat and egg sales
- Best food-handling practices for vendors
- Rules and regulations from the Department of Health
- County and local health and safety rules
- Sampling
- Food Stamps
- Tennessee farmers market nutrition program
- Marketing live animals at farmers markets
- Farmers market liability
- Hold harmless agreements



Vendor booths can be easily marked for permanent (reserved) and first-come purposes.

Assignment of vendor booth space – Many farmers markets experience controversy and problems in the assignment of vendor booth spaces. While some markets address such problems by implementing a “first come, first choice” policy, other markets find that such a system actually causes the most friction and animosity. Similarly, some markets offer first pick of booth space to the market manager, while other markets experience problems when the market manager is also a vendor and, therefore, prevent their market manager from also being a vendor. Other markets implement a totally random dispersal of booths on the day before the market opens each season. Some markets leave the assignment of booth spaces to the total discretion of the market manager. Some markets have permanent and temporary booths that have different rental rates. In many cases, permanent booths are provided to vendors who commit to the market for the entire season and pay the appropriate permanent booth rental rates. In many cases, permanent booths are selected by the vendors on “first come, first choice” basis when the permanent booth rental fees are paid and in relation to seniority. There does not appear to be any single method of assigning booth spaces that is the best for all markets. There are many methods used by different markets. The protocol for how booth spaces will be assigned should be described in the market rules and provide appropriate incentives to producers. Maintaining a considerable level of transparency will allay fears that favoritism is an issue.



Well-marked vendor booth spaces maintain safe, attractive and consistent market appearance for vendors and customers.



While the actual dimensions of vendor booth spaces vary from market-to-market, regardless of the actual size, well-marked vendor spaces can help keep conflicts to a minimum.

Acceptable products – The types of products available for sale at a farmers market vary greatly from one market to another. In most cases, the decision to permit the sale of specific products at a market is a reflection of the mission and objectives of the local market. Some markets exist only to promote the sale of locally grown products and, therefore, do not allow any produce grown outside of the local county, nor do they allow any hand-made or home-made products to be sold. Other markets implement a local policy but do not exclude food or non-agricultural products. The primary issues that tend to arise in the identification of types of products allowed are source of product and product types. Products typically allowed for sale at farmers markets include fresh produce, food products, plants and flowers. Other products that are sometimes found at farmers markets include meat products, crafts, hand-made items, antiques and animals. After a market decides which products may be sold, enforcing this decision becomes the next hurdle. Enforcement is often eased with a fair and active market manager, well-written and well-communicated market rules and a system to verify sources of products. Markets that only allow local products must clearly define the term “local” and provide a method for vendors to certify or testify to their residence and product origin. Markets that allow non-local products, but limit the amount, must also develop a way for the vendor to certify the source of the products. Such certification is often in the form of a signed, sometimes notarized, form or legal affidavit. Building strong relationships and good communications can prevent many problems regarding products allowed for sale at a farmers market. Occasionally markets will require that the source of all products be labeled.

Merchandising – The leadership and management of farmers markets often use the market rules as a pro-active method of addressing the merchandising techniques of vendors. Most markets will promote effective, informative, transparent and attractive merchandising techniques, while at the same time preventing the use of loud, antagonistic and misleading tactics. Many markets specifically prevent loud and distracting methods of bringing attention to a specific booth or product (hawking). Many markets will offer workshops and educational sessions for vendors to help improve their merchandising skills.



The appearance of vendors and their booths can make a positive statement to customers.

Markets may require that all products offered for sale be clearly priced. Markets encourage good customer relations by vendors in a variety of ways. Some specify how vendors should be dressed, while some require certain signage at each booth.

Some markets require that the source of production be labeled for every item offered for sale.



Special events such as music and entertainment can attract customers.

Promotion/Advertisement – The leadership and management involved with farmers markets have a significant amount of responsibility for promoting and advertising the market. Very few markets actually find long-term success with the “build it and they will come” philosophy. Both potential customers and vendors often need regular reminders that a local farmers market is in operation. A variety of methods are used to make people aware of farmers markets. Some markets try to keep the market open as long as possible by featuring a variety of activities, special events and seasonal products. They find that this allows them something to promote all the time. Other markets rely on a shorter “open” season and rely on the momentum of a huge grand-opening to get the word out for the entire season. Most markets, however, do find that regular promotions and advertising improve overall market success. Many farmers markets find that a complete arsenal of marketing and promotion materials such as brochures, flyers, postcards, e-mail blast, direct mail, local radio promotions and effective signage should be utilized.

Special events – Special events are often used to attract new customers, extend market hours, days and seasons and as a way to offer something new that will garner additional publicity and media attention. Craft fairs, talent shows, music, entertainment, festivals and contests are examples of events that are planned in conjunction with farmers markets as a way of increasing customer traffic and gaining new customers.

Credit cards – In most cases, the decision to accept credit cards for payment of products at a farmers market is left up to each individual vendor. While the overall number of farmers market vendors who accept credit cards is still small, the number is increasing. Vendors who accept credit cards at their on-farm retail markets are usually the first to introduce credit card sales at farmers markets.

Sales tax – While sales tax is the ultimate responsibility of each individual vendor, many farmers markets find that offering educational programs to inform vendors of sales tax requirements are mutually beneficial. Oftentimes, farmers markets will sponsor a meeting of all vendors where a representative from the Tennessee Department of Revenue will discuss sales tax issues and will explain specific sales tax scenarios. As a general rule, vendors who sell fresh produce that they grew themselves do not have to charge sales tax on those items. In fact, if more than 50 percent of a farmer's total sales in a calendar year are from products he/she grew, no sales tax has to be collected for any of the products. However, sales tax is required on the non-raised products if less than 50 percent of the total is raised. Each vendor is encouraged to find out the sales tax applications for his/her personal situation. Sales tax regulations are very complex. It is important for vendors to take the time to learn how the sales tax rules apply to their specific operations. The Tennessee Department of Revenue can be contacted at 1-800-342-1003. Additional information from the Tennessee Department of Revenue can also be obtained on line at www.state.tn.us/revenue.

Market maintenance – Maintenance of farmers markets grounds and facilities can be a major burden. While daily clean-up can be a very important shared responsibility of market vendors, long-term repairs and maintenance of parking lots, structures and facilities often require great expense, planning and commitment. Maintenance issues for farmers markets are often eased when partnerships with city or county “parks and recreation,” or “sanitation” or “public works” departments are developed. When such partnerships do not exist, farmers market leadership and management often must find additional resources to adequately address maintenance issues.



Attractive and sturdy trash cans should be placed throughout the market.

Equipment and utilities – The equipment and utilities provided at a farmers market often depend on the physical facilities and type of building that is used. Markets that are located on open lots (no buildings or cover provided) often do not have any utilities, unless portable restroom and hand-washing facilities are provided. Markets that are in facilities built exclusively for the operation of a farmers market or that are in buildings equipped with utilities will provide a variety of utility services to vendors – often at additional costs to the vendors. Typically, any available utilities are provided by the market organization rather than individual vendors. Equipment such as tables and chairs for individual vendors may be provided by the market or vendors – this too often depends on the physical facilities and type of building available for the market. Most markets seem to leave tables and chairs to the discretion of each vendor. However, in order to create a uniform and traditional market atmosphere, some markets will provide tables, stands, racks or counters. Some markets may make tables and chairs available to vendors at an additional fee. Whether tables and chairs are provided by the market or the responsibility of each vendor varies from one market to another.

Food regulations for vendors – Currently in Tennessee, there are no regulations governing the sale of uncut, unpackaged or unprocessed foods. That

is, fresh produce (uncut and unprocessed) can be sold directly to consumers by farmers without any required permits, license or registration. However, value-added food products (packaged, cut, snapped, sliced, processed) that are intended for sale must be prepared according to rules and regulations of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. Rules and regulations set by state government with oversight by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture are the minimum regulations applicable statewide. In some cases, city or county governments may impose regulations that exceed the state requirements. Food products sold in counties that have regulations more stringent than the state regulations must comply with the county regulations.

Jams, jellies, pies, cakes and cookies are some of the more common food products sold by vendors at farmers markets. In order to be sold, these and all other food products must have been prepared according to the state's food manufacturing regulations or domestic kitchen rules. Additional information on both of these food product regulations is available in UT Extension Publication PB 1710 <<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/pbfiles/pb1710.pdf>>.



All scales used at farmers markets, regardless of types, must be “legal for trade.”

It is important for farmers, market vendors and managers to understand that it is illegal to sell processed food products that were not prepared in facilities permitted by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. Small volumes of non-potentially hazardous food products can be prepared according to the state's domestic kitchen rules². The domestic kitchen rules allow for non-potentially hazardous food products to be prepared in inspected home kitchens – products allowed for production in home kitchens under the a domestic kitchen permit include most cookies, pies, jams, jellies and cakes. Items not allowed for production under the domestic kitchen rules include, but are not limited to, canned vegetables of any type that are processed in a home canner, acidified foods such as pickled foods and salsa, processed dairy products in any form or products that contain meat. For the purpose of domestic kitchen rules, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture reserves the right to determine if a specific food meets the definition of a “non-potentially hazardous food.” Domestic kitchens must be permitted by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (\$50 annual fee) and owners must complete a specific food-processing course. For additional information on TDA food regulations, contact the Food and Dairy Sector, Regulatory Services Division of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture at 615-837-5193.

Certified scales – The Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures Department is responsible for inspecting and permitting all scales that will be used to make sales in Tennessee. This applies to produce that is sold by weight at farmers markets. Only scales that are “legal for trade” can be permitted. Most modern scales are affixed with labels indicating whether they are “legal for trade” or not. Any farmers market vendor who sells produce by weight must use scales that are inspected and permitted by TDA. The weights and measures administrator for TDA and can be contacted regarding inspection and permitting for scales at 615-837-5109. It is important for farmers market vendors to understand that products sold according to weight must be figured according to the net weight of the product and cannot include the weight of a carton or container.

² Tennessee's Domestic Kitchen Rules were implemented on January 27, 2007. A copy of these rules can be obtained by contacting the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Regulatory Services Division at 615-837-5150.

Meat and egg sales – Meat and eggs cannot be sold by vendors at farmers markets without approval from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. The type of permit and inspection by TDA for egg producers can depend on the size of the operation and the number of eggs sold in a year. Farm-raised eggs may be sold at farmers markets if the farm sells less than 1500 dozen eggs per year, has obtained the correct permit from TDA, uses only generic cartons, labels each carton as unclassified eggs and includes the farm name and address on the cartons. Vendors of meat products may also fall under various scenarios of permit and inspection. Vendors and potential vendors of meat and egg products are encouraged to contact the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Regulatory Services Division (615-837-5155 or 5534) to discuss the specific details of their operation.

Best food-handling practices for vendors – The vendor's role in food safety cannot be overlooked. Regardless of the products offered, each vendor should be aware of how food-handling practices can affect the health of consumers. Safe food-handling practices should be implemented by vendors of fresh, unprocessed foods, as well as vendors of processed and baked goods. Several publications that address safe food-handling practices are available from agencies and universities across the country. Several of these resources are listed in Appendix J. Many farmers markets require vendors to participate in educator meetings, seminars and workshops that are sponsored by the market.

Rules and regulations from the Department of Health – As a general rule, the Tennessee Department of Health is the regulatory authority of food products intended for on-site consumption. This includes restaurants, cafeterias, snack bars and concession stands. The Department of Health also has oversight for food sampling, fund-raising food booths and portable food stands.

County and local health and safety rules – Regarding food and produce offered for sale at local farmers markets, it is important to reiterate that while state laws, regulations, policies and rules apply as minimum standards statewide, local and county regulations that exceed state requirements can be implemented.



Sampling may be used as a means to increase sells, but vendors must contact the Tennessee Department of Health for information on sampling.

Sampling – Vendors who provide samples of produce or food products to consumers should first contact the Tennessee Department of Health for information on guidelines for product sampling. Sampling includes the slicing of fresh produce and offering these slices to customers free of charge. There are numerous health, safety and liability issues associated with food consumption. Sampling oftentimes creates increased opportunities for food contamination. Because of the potential for food contamination in environments such as farmers markets, vendors should be very careful providing food samples and should understand and comply with county and state Department of Health policies.

Food Stamps – Vendors at farmers markets who wish to accept Food Stamps must be licensed to participate in the Food Stamp Program. In Tennessee, the USDA Food Stamp Program is handled electronically, which means that farmers market vendors who participate in the program must invest in the appropriate equipment, must be properly trained and must have electricity available at the market to operate the equipment. Food Stamps are issued through EBT cards (Electronic Benefits Transfer). EBT allows the vendor to accept the Food Stamp payment for food using the EBT card – similar to a debit card. USDA is the agency responsible for authorizing retailers and farmers to accept Food Stamp benefits. In Tennessee, the USDA field office in Nashville should be contacted

to begin the process of becoming an authorized retailer. Their telephone number is 615-736-5758. Additional information about the USDA Food Stamp program is also available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/retailers/default.htm>.

Tennessee farmers market nutrition program – There are two federally funded nutrition assistance programs active in Tennessee that provide some low-income individuals with vouchers that can be redeemed at farmers markets. These programs are the WIC Farmers Market program and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. Currently in Tennessee, WIC Farmers Market vouchers are only issued to qualifying, low-income mothers and children in eight counties³ and senior vouchers are only issued in five counties⁴. If a farmers market vendor wishes to accept the vouchers, he/she must first be certified by the Tennessee Department of Health. Certification requires the farmer/vendor to complete a training class and be issued an official stamp. After he/she is certified, the vendor can accept the vouchers, stamp them and deposit them at the bank, similar to a personal check. The Tennessee Department of Health offers the farmer certification training each spring in areas where the vouchers are provided. Farmers who wish to be certified to accept the vouchers must be re-trained and issued a stamp each year. Additional information about the WIC program can be obtained at www.fns.usda.gov/wic. Additional information about the overall Tennessee Farmers Market Nutrition Program can be obtained by contacting Ann Hopton at the Tennessee Department of Health (615-532-8184).



Customers at farmers market are often pleased to find a variety of products include fresh cut flowers and potted plants.

Plant certification for selling rooted plant materials at farmers markets

– People or firms selling rooted plant materials at farmers markets in Tennessee have to be certified by TDA before selling their nursery materials. There are several types of nursery, greenhouse or plant dealer applications. A firm purchasing rooted plant materials from a nursery or greenhouse for resale must purchase those plant materials from a state-certified nursery. A description of the various applications can be obtained from TDA Division of Regulatory Services, Plant Certification Section Web site at: <http://tennessee.gov/agriculture/regulate/permits/permit5.html> or by calling that office at 615-837-5137.

Additional information can be obtained by visiting <http://tennessee.gov/agriculture/regulate/permits/plants/index.html> regarding imported fire ants, current certificate holders and the TDA plant certification staff.

Marketing live animals at farmers markets – Currently there are no license or permit requirements for selling live animals at organized forums such as farmers markets. However, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Regulatory Services, through the state veterinarian, has concerns regarding the health and disease status of animals present in such settings. The state veterinarian⁵ reports that the number of animals entering organized forums such as farmers markets, auctions and flea markets has increased in recent years. Much of the concern of live animals being sold in organized forums stems from heightened awareness of Avian Influenza and the number of live birds being congregated, sold and transported. In Tennessee, horses sold through any system or setting must have a negative test for EIA (equine infectious

³ The eight Tennessee counties that are currently issuing WIC Farmers Market vouchers include: Bedford, Coffee, Lincoln, Madison, Maury, Moore, Rutherford and Sullivan.

⁴ The five Tennessee counties that are currently issuing senior vouchers include: Davidson, Dyer, Hamblen, Shelby and Warren.

⁵ Personal communication with Tennessee State Veterinarian, Dr. Ron Wilson, Tennessee Department of Agriculture, December 20, 2006.

anemia) within the last six months, and most goats and sheep require official identification. There are additional requirements for certain species of animals that come into or through Tennessee – in general, these animals require a health certificate and official identification. Poultry require a negative Pullorum test, while goats and sheep require compliance with the scrapie program (i.e., official identification). The applicable rules for in-state movement can be obtained from the state veterinarian. Additional information on the rules for livestock entering Tennessee from other states is available at the following Web site: <http://www.state.tn.us/sos/rules/0080/0080-02/0080-02-01.pdf> The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) should be contacted for rules and regulations on the sale of wildlife and game animals.



Some markets require vendors to sign a hold-harmless agreement in combination with risk-management methods.

Farmers market liability – It is important for the leaders and managers involved with farmers markets to understand that as an organized forum for food commerce, the market entity itself shares in the liability for food safety, along with individual vendors. Farmers market organizations deal with liability in a variety of ways. Some markets require that each vendor have a minimum level of food product liability insurance. Some markets ask that each vendor sign a hold-harmless agreement releasing the market organization from liability. Some markets have legal counsel as an active part of their board and some markets are well-insured.

Hold-harmless agreements⁶ – Hold-harmless agreements or liability waivers signed by a vendor may be one method a farmers market might use to manage risk. A hold-harmless agreement indicates that the person signing the agreement will not hold the market liable for damages or injuries sustained at the market. Many questions exist about the effectiveness of hold-harmless agreements in the management of risk. Such agreements may not prevent liability claims or lawsuits nor decrease the obligations of the market to create a safe environment and ensure the sale of only safe products at the market. If hold-harmless agreements are used by a market, it is suggested that they not be the only method of risk management but, rather, used in combination with other methods. Hold-harmless agreements may be a good way for the market to formally remind vendors that they too have a role in safety at the market. The leadership and management of farmers markets are encouraged to consult an insurance agent and attorney about the use of hold-harmless agreements as a part of overall risk-management plans.

⁶ Adapted from Agritourism in Focus: A Guide for Tennessee Farmers, UT Extension PB 1754, Chapter - Risk Assessment and Management, p. 63, September 2005.

CHAPTER 6 – Additional Educational Materials/Resources

In addition to a number of people who serve as great resources and leadership in the consideration and development of local farmers markets, a variety of printed and on-line educational materials are available. Conferences, workshops, commercial magazines, professional associations and other educational venues also provide good educational opportunities. Below is a listing of other educational materials and resources that may provide supplemental details to this publication and serve as good reading material for those involved with the planning, development and operation of local farmers markets.

Tennessee Farmers Market Directory, online at the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Market Development, <<http://picktnproducts.org/>>.

Direct Marketing Guide for Producers of Fruits, Vegetable and Other Specialty Products. Charles R. Hall, Professor, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Tennessee. 2002. <<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/pbfiles/PB1711.pdf>>

Farmers Markets Rules, Regulations and Opportunities: An Agricultural Law Research Article from the National Agricultural Law Center. Neil Hamilton, University of Arkansas School of Law. June 2002. <<http://www.law.drake.edu/centers/docs/farmersMarkets.pdf>>

The New Farmers Market: Farm-Fresh Ideas for Producers, Managers and Communities, Vance Corum, Marcie Rosenzweig and Eric Gibson. New World Publishing, Auburn, California. 2001.

Starting a New Farmers Market, Volume 1, Desmond Jolly, University of California Small Farm Center, 2005. <<http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/docs/publications.asp?view=8>>

Farmers Market Management Skills, Volume 2, Desmond Jolly, University of California Small Farm Center, 2005. <<http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/docs/publications.asp?view=9>>

Rules and Regulations for Certified Farmers' Markets – California Farmers' Market Association. <<http://www.cafarmersmkts.com/cfmarulesregs.pdf>>

Growing Your Market, Volume 3, Desmond Jolly, University of California Small Farm Center, 2005. <<http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/docs/publications.asp?view=10>>

Food Safety at Farmers Markets and Agritourism Venues: A Primer for California Operators, Desmond Jolly and Chris Lewis, University of California Small Farm Center, 2005. <<http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/docs/publications.asp?view=11>>

A Guide to Managing Risks and Liability at California Certified Farmers Markets, Desmond Jolly and Chris Lewis, University of California Small Farm Center. <<http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/pubs/brochures/rmafmall0504.pdf>>

U.S. Farmers Markets – 2000: A Study of Emerging Trends. Tim Payne, Economist. USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. 2002. <<http://www.law.drake.edu/centers/docs/farmersMarkets.pdf>>

Farmers Market Development Manual, State of Alabama Farmers Market Authority. <http://www.fma.state.al.us/PDFs_NEW/Market%20Development%20Manual.pdf>

Step by Step Guide For Establishing a Farmers' Market Association. Farmers' Market Federation of New York, NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets. <http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/pdf_files/developingFMA.pdf>

Facilities for Roadside Markets. Arthur Selders, Ransom Blakeley, Grant Wells, Robert Martin, Francis Gilman, Lynne Irwin and Otho Wells. Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Service, Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, New York, NRAES-52. 1992.

Food Safety for Farmers' Markets. Karen Garst, Extension Horticulturist, Kansas State University, MF-2260, May 1997. <<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/hort2/mf2260.pdf>>

Postharvest Handling of Fruits and Vegetables, Janet Bachmann and Richard Earles, NCAT Agriculture Specialists. August 2000 <<http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/farmmrkt.html>>

Safe Handling of Food at Open Markets, Judy M. Willingham, Extension Associate, Kansas State University. March 2001. <<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/fntr2/FOODASYST/8market.pdf>>

Temporary Food Facility Guidelines: Your Guide to Handling Food and Food Booth Requirements. San Luis Obispo County Health Department Environmental Health Services, San Luis Obispo, California. <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Assets/PH/Forms/TEMPFOOD_FACHANDOUT.pdf>

CHAPTER 7 – Summary

Farmers markets have increased in popularity in recent years for numerous reasons, including various advantages to growers, consumers and the local community. The purpose of this handbook is to provide detailed information on establishing a farmers market and thoughts on how to operate the market once established. The handbook is intended for use by farmers and community leaders who are often involved in planning and organizing farmers markets.

It is important for those people interested in organizing a farmers market to realize that each farmers market is different – each is in a different location, has different management, different customers and different vendors is organized different and has a different operational structure. Location will have a significant impact on the market as will the unique characteristics of all the people involved.

While a farmers market provides a number of benefits to farmers, consumers and communities, it takes hours of time, dedication and energy to study, plan, organize and develop a successful market. This guide is intended to assist in understanding the typical steps involved with considering and developing a farmers market.

APPENDICES

A - - Sample Farmers Market Bylaws

B - - Sample Mail Survey for Potential Vendors/Growers Prior to Market Establishment

C - - Sample Telephone Survey for Potential Customers

D - - Sample Outline of a Vendor Application

E - - Sample Mail Survey for Growers after End of Season

F - - Sample Personal Interview for Customers during Market Operation

G - - Sample Farmers Market Site Review Sheet

H - - Sample Farmers Market Safety Checklist

I - - Sample Farmers Market Rules

J - - Additional Resources That Address Safe Food-Handling Practices

APPENDIX A

Sample Farmers Market Bylaws

Bylaws of the _____ Farmers Market Association

Article One – Organization

The name of this organization shall be the _____ Farmers Market Association.
The initial office of the corporation shall be _____,
Street, _____ City, State.

Article Two – Purpose

The Association has been organized on a non-profit (profit) basis for the following purposes:

- (1) To provide market capabilities for farmers to promote their products directly to the consumer.
- (2) To provide high-quality produce to consumers at a reasonable price.
- (3) To establish and maintain basic operating standards and representation for members.
- (4) To provide the association with publicity to promote the sale of Tennessee produce.

Article Three – Membership

1. Membership shall be open to any bonafide _____ farmer (marketer), raising 50 percent (0-100) of his/her produce, and who meets all requirements as set forth in these bylaws. (Many markets may make exceptions for non-producers or dealers, one-crop farmers and very small growers who may only sell one or two times during the season).
2. The executive committee shall be responsible for accepting new members; however, any bonafide _____ farmer (marketer) who has been refused membership shall have the right to appeal before the _____ (Dept. of Agriculture, County Commissioner or Municipal official, etc.).

Article Four – Meetings

1. There shall be at least one membership meeting of the Association held each year. Thirty days notice will be given to all members prior to the date of the meeting.
2. The scheduling and location of meetings shall be decided by a majority vote of the members present at the previous meeting. Special meetings shall be held at the call of the president of the association, after due notification of all members. Three or more members may direct the president to call a special meeting.

Article Five – Board of Directors

1. The government of the association shall be vested in an elected committee of five members known as the board of directors.
2. At the first meeting of the calendar year, the two directors receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected for a 3-year period, the next two highest for 2-years, and the next highest one for a 1-year period. At the expiration of the terms of the Board of Directors so elected, their successors shall be elected and in like manner serve for terms of three years. All members of the board of directors shall be elected by ballot.

3. The board of directors shall meet within a month after the election. Three members of the board shall constitute a quorum. At the first meeting following their election, the board of directors shall be organized and the executive officers elected – executive officers to be president, vice president, treasurer and secretary.

Article Six – Duties of Board of Directors

1. The duties of the board of directors shall be to transact all business of the association, to establish the policy of said association regarding program of activities; to authorize all contracts for services and supplies; to prepare a budget for each operating period (space cost, insurance, market manager, advertising) and recommend daily, monthly or seasonal rental rates per stall.
2. The Board shall have the power to employ a manager, define his/her duties and fix his/her compensation.
3. In the event of any vacancy on the board of directors, the remaining members shall select any member of the association in good standing to fill the vacancy until the election meeting of the association in _____ when the appointment shall expire and the association shall elect a member to fill the unexpired term.

Article Seven – Duties of Officers and Manager

1. The president shall call a meeting of the executive board of directors at any time when, in his/her judgment, there is business to be transacted. He/she shall appoint all committees from the board of directors and the association membership, and delegate authority to the committees to assist the board of directors in performing any duties necessary to promote the interests of the association. Special meetings shall be held upon call of the president.
2. The vice president shall perform all duties of the president in his/her absence.
3. The treasurer shall hold all association money, pay all bills upon order of the board of directors and present his/her books and records for auditing on request of the board of directors. He/she shall execute a guarantee bond to such amount as the directors shall determine, the premium to be paid by the association.
4. The secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of all meetings; send a written notice to the members _____ days prior to each meeting; attend to all correspondence of the association; and perform any duties for the association assigned by the board of directors.
5. The manager shall perform such duties and shall exercise such authority as the board may from time to time vest in him/her. Under the general supervision of the board, the manager shall have general charge of the ordinary and usual business operations of the association, including the purchasing, marketing and handling of all products and supplies handled by the association. He/she shall render annual and other statements in the form and in the manner prescribed by the board of directors. He/she shall employ, supervise and dismiss any and all employees of the association.
6. It shall further be the duty of the board of directors to promote, by regulation and management, the farmers market. In pursuance thereof, the following rules and regulations are hereby adopted.

Article Eight – Market Rules and Operating Guidelines

The market rules and operating guidelines shall be developed each year by the association board of directors and submitted at the association's annual meeting for approval by the membership. Rules and operating guidelines may be amended, added to or deleted from at any time only by majority vote of the membership.

APPENDIX B

Sample Mail Survey for Potential Vendor/Growers Prior to Market Establishment

Dear Grower:

Last spring you may have received a questionnaire about your interest in a proposed retail farmers market in _____. Plans are progressing on the development of the market and it is now tentatively scheduled to open in (month). The farmers market will be located _____.

A key to the success of any farmers market is a core of growers/marketers who offer a variety of quality farm products for sale to consumers. The _____ Farmers Market – Market Committee is actively seeking interested growers/marketers for this market.

Would you like to participate? If you are interested, please do the following by (date):

1. Inspect the market site.
2. Complete the enclosed survey in the return envelope provided.
3. Return the 3" x 5" card with your name and address.

Those who return the enclosed completed survey form and address card will receive a written confirmation of your interest in the market. Your prompt response in returning these items will enhance your chance of securing the stall location of your choice. If you have questions, please contact _____ at the number listed below.

As soon as the _____ Farmers Market Market Committee establishes stall rental fees, the schedule of hours, days and season of operation and market rules and operating guidelines, we will send you a vendor application form.

Sincerely,

Chairman

Farmers Market
Market Committee

Enclosure: Farmer/Vendor Pre-market Survey

**Sample Survey for Farmers/Vendors
PRE-MARKET**

1. In which county do you live? _____
2. Are you interested in selling in the retail farmers market in _____ this year? The target date for opening is _____.
Check one _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not this year, maybe later
3. In the past year, did you: Check those that apply:
_____ sell farm produce in a retail farmers market?
_____ operate a roadside market?
_____ operate a pick-your-own operation?
_____ am not currently operating, but am considering it.
_____ none of the above
_____ other, explain _____
4. How many acres of your farm are devoted to:
Fruits for fresh market? _____ acres
Vegetables for fresh market? _____ acres
5. Are you a full-time or part-time farmer? Full-time _____ Part-time _____
6. If a farmers market were operating, how interested would you be in selling in it?
_____ Very interested _____ Moderately interested
_____ Slightly interested _____ Not interested
7. Stall rental costs will be related to the kind of facility that is established. What type of stall would you like to have the opportunity to rent?
_____ Indoor stall
_____ Outdoor stall
_____ Indoor plus outdoor sales at peak of season
8. Would you be interested in renting space on :
_____ Annual basis _____ Semi-annual basis _____ Monthly basis
_____ Weekly basis _____ Daily basis
9. Which months would you be interested in selling in the market?
_____ year-round _____ April _____ August
_____ January _____ May _____ September
_____ February _____ June _____ October
_____ March _____ July _____ November
_____ December
10. Which days of the week would you prefer the market to be open?
_____ Monday _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday
_____ Friday _____ Saturday _____ Sunday
11. Which specific hours during the day do you think the market should be open? Please write in the specific hours.
From _____ to _____ Comments, if any, about the hours. _____

12. Which products would you be able to sell?

Vegetables

- ☐ Beans
- ☐ Beets
- ☐ Broccoli
- ☐ Cabbage
- ☐ Corn
- ☐ Cucumber
- ☐ Greens
- ☐ Lettuce
- ☐ Mushrooms
- ☐ Onions
- ☐ Peanuts
- ☐ Peas (Black-eyed)
- ☐ Peppers
- ☐ Potatoes
- ☐ Spinach
- ☐ Squash
- ☐ Sweet potatoes
- ☐ Tomatoes
- ☐ Turnips
- ☐ Other (list) _____

Fruits

- ☐ Blackberries
- ☐ Cantaloupe
- ☐ Oranges
- ☐ Grapefruit
- ☐ Honeydew melons
- ☐ Peaches
- ☐ Pecans
- ☐ Plums
- ☐ Pumpkin
- ☐ Strawberries
- ☐ Watermelons
- ☐ Other fruits (list) _____

Other

- ☐ Baked goods
- ☐ Bedding plants
- ☐ Christmas trees
- ☐ Crafts
- ☐ Cut flowers
- ☐ Eggs
- ☐ Honey
- ☐ Jams & jellies
- ☐ Nursery stock
- ☐ Other items _____

13. For each item listed in question 12, we need to know when the product would likely be available for sale and an estimate of the amount. Please list each item you checked in question 12 along with the amount you expect to have available and dates expected.

<u>Example:</u>	Strawberries	100 8-qt. flats	June 4 - June 20
Specific items	Amount to be available (per week, per season)	Dates available	
_____	_____	_____	

14. Which types of products do you think should be sold at the market? Check one.

- ☐ Only agricultural products produced by the vendor selling them.
- ☐ Only "local" agricultural products (not necessarily sold by the grower)
- ☐ Only products grown in the state.
- ☐ Any products from anywhere.
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

15. Would you like to have crafts and other home- produced items for sale? Check one. ☐ Yes ☐ No

16. What additional facilities and services do you think are important to a farmers market? Please rate each of the following facilities/services in terms of their importance to a successful market where a rating of 1 = very important, 2 = important and 3 = less important.

- ☐ Coffee shop
- ☐ Lunch or snack counter
- ☐ Vending machines
- ☐ Paved parking
- ☐ Ample and easily accessible unloading space for vendors near their selling area
- ☐ Pay telephones for vendors and customers
- ☐ Staffed market office with phone for vendors' use only
- ☐ Refrigeration and cooler facilities available for storage
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

17. Would you be interested in receiving a training program in displaying and merchandising products for a proposed retail farmers market?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Thank you for your cooperation. Please return the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided.

APPENDIX C

Sample Telephone Survey of Potential Customers

Interviewer Number _____ Phone Number _____

Introduction: Hello, I am _____ calling for _____ County Farmers Market. We are planning to open a farmers market this season, and we are trying to gauge community interest in the market. I have a few question I'd like to ask you. This survey will only take about _____ minutes, and I would appreciate your thoughts and input.

1. First, how long have you lived in the _____ area? Check one.
☐ 1 year or less
☐ 2 to 4 years ☐ 10 to 19 years
☐ 5 to 9 years ☐ 20 or more years
2. Last summer, did you buy fresh fruits and vegetables at any of the following locations: Check each location where they were bought.
☐ At a roadside stand? ☐ At a farmers market?
☐ At a pick-your-own operation? ☐ At markets other than supermarkets?
3. Which of the following four statements describes your feelings about shopping at the proposed _____ farmers market when it opens: Check one.
☐ I will definitely shop there ☐ I will probably shop there
☐ Not sure ☐ I probably won't shop there
☐ I will not shop there at all.

Please answer questions 4 and 5 only if respondent is **not** planning to shop at proposed market.

4. Are there any particular reasons you do not plan to shop at the market?
☐ No ☐ Yes If yes, ask question 5.
5. What is the specific reason why you probably will not be shopping at the market? Check one. Do not read responses.
☐ Not interested in the market
☐ You are not mobile enough, health not good or no transportation
☐ Prefer to shop elsewhere
☐ I raise my own fresh fruits and vegetables
☐ Am moving away, am away for summer
☐ Other (explain) _____
6. Is there another location that you would prefer over the present location?
☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, ask "Could you explain where the preferred location would be?" _____

7. Which season would you like the market to be open, (months of the year)? Check those that apply.
☐ January ☐ May ☐ September
☐ February ☐ June ☐ October
☐ March ☐ July ☐ November
☐ April ☐ August ☐ December
☐ Year-round

8. Which day or days of the week would you like the market to be open? Check those that apply.
 ___ Monday ___ Thursday ___ Sunday
 ___ Tuesday ___ Friday
 ___ Wednesday ___ Saturday
9. Which hours do you think the proposed market should be open? _____
 (Write in specific hours reported, then check category)
 ___ Mornings only
 ___ Afternoons only
 ___ Mornings and afternoons
10. Would you like for the market to be open one day of the week during the late afternoon and early evening hours?
 ___ No ___ Yes ___ Doesn't matter
11. Which different kinds of products would you like to be able to buy in the proposed market? (After first response ask, "Are there other products, or products other than fruits and vegetables that you would like to be able to buy?")

Check those that apply. Do not read responses.

- ___ Fresh fruits and vegetables
 ___ Cut flowers and or potted plants
 ___ Eggs
 ___ Cheese
 ___ Baked goods
 ___ Poultry, red meats
 ___ Honey
 ___ Seeds, whole grains and dried fruit
 ___ Antiques and collectibles
 ___ Crafts
 ___ Jams and jellies
 ___ Other (explain) _____

12. Which fresh vegetables would you want to be able to buy at the _____ farmers market? First ask "Which specific vegetables would you buy?"

Check those that apply.

(After first response ask, "Are there any other vegetables you would buy?")

- ___ Beans ___ Greens ___ Potatoes
 ___ Beets ___ Lettuce ___ Spinach
 ___ Broccoli ___ Mushrooms ___ Squash
 ___ Cabbage ___ Onions ___ Sweet potatoes
 ___ Carrots ___ Peanuts ___ Tomatoes
 ___ Corn ___ Peas (Black-eyed) ___ Turnips
 ___ Cucumber ___ Peppers
 ___ Other (list) _____

13. Now, which specific fresh fruits would you want to buy at the market? Check those that apply. (After the first response ask, "Are there any other fresh fruits that you would like to buy?")

- ___ Blackberries ___ Peaches ___ Watermelons
 ___ Cantaloupe ___ Pecan
 ___ Orange ___ Plums
 ___ Grapefruit ___ Pumpkin
 ___ Honeydew melons ___ Strawberries
 ___ Other (list) _____

14. Do you buy fresh fruits and vegetables for immediate fresh consumption, or canning and freezing, or both? Check one.
☐ Primarily immediate fresh consumption
☐ Primarily canning and freezing
☐ Both immediate fresh use and canning and freezing
15. How would you prefer to be informed about plans for the opening of the market? Check one. Do not read responses.
☐ Television
☐ Article in daily or weekly newspaper
☐ Radio
☐ Direct mailer
☐ Doesn't really matter
☐ Other (explain) _____
16. Do you have any suggestions about things that are needed or services that should be available at the market?

Now, I have a few questions about you and your family:

17. Including yourself, how many persons live in your household now? ____ persons
18. Do you have children currently at home?
☐ No children at home (If No, skip Question 19)
☐ Yes
19. How old are they? Check one.
☐ All under 13
☐ All 13 to 17
☐ Some in both age groups
☐ Not applicable
20. Would you please tell me the age group of the main food shopper in your household... that is, would it be 20s, 30s, 40s? Check one.
☐ 18-19
☐ 20s
☐ 30s
☐ 40s
☐ 50s
☐ 60s
☐ Refused
21. Is the female head of household currently employed outside of the home? Check one.
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ No female head

That's all the questions I have. Thank you very much for your cooperation and your time.

22. Record respondent's gender. ____ Male ____ Female

APPENDIX D

Sample Outline of a Vendor Application Form

APPLICATION

(Please Print Clearly) Name of Contact Person: _____

Names of Others Involved: _____

Farm/Business Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

County: _____

Phone Number: _____ Cell Number: _____

Primary Products to be Sold and Source: _____

Number of Acres Farmed: _____

The information that I have provided on this form is correct. I have received a copy of the current Market Rules and I agree to follow them.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Market Management Use Only:

Date received: _____

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX E

Sample Mail Survey for Growers after End of Season

Please answer these questions about your experience selling at the _____ Farmers Market this year and about your plans for next year. Return the completed form in the addressed envelope provided.

1. How many years have you been selling at this market? ____ Years
2. How many times did you sell at the _____ Farmers Market this year?
3. On what basis did you rent stall space at this market? Check one.
☐ Annual basis ☐ Weekly
☐ Semi-annual basis ☐ Daily
☐ Monthly ☐ Sublet from _____
4. How many stalls do you normally rent? ____ Number of stalls
5. Does the number of stalls vary depending on the time of year?
☐ Yes
☐ No
If yes, how does it change?
☐ More stalls rented in peak harvest period
☐ Not selling at market in off-season
6. Which products do you sell at the market?
☐ Fresh fruits and vegetables ☐ Bakery products
☐ Meats or poultry products ☐ Crafts
☐ Honey ☐ Other (explain) _____
☐ Floral or nursery products
7. How many miles is your farm from this market? ____ Miles
8. In which city, town or county is your farm located? _____
9. Would you consider yourself a : Check one.
☐ Producer – you grow 50 percent or more of what you sell at this market
☐ Producer – you grow less than 50 percent of what you sell at this market
☐ Marketer – you buy agricultural produce for resale only
☐ Marketer – you sell only non-agricultural produce
☐ Other (explain) _____
10. Would you consider yourself : Check one.
☐ Employed full-time in farming
☐ Part-time farmer (50 percent or less of income comes from farming)
☐ Vendor – income is from resale of agricultural produce only
☐ Vendor – income is from sale of crafts and other products
☐ Other, explain _____
11. This year, in addition to selling at the market, did you also: Check one.
☐ Operate a roadside market?
☐ Have a pick-your-own operation?
☐ Sell at another farmers market?
☐ Other (explain) _____

12. About what percent of your farm products is sold at farmers markets? ____ Percent
13. Over the last three years, would you say the total volume of your own produce sold at this market has: Check one.
 ____ Increased
 ____ Decreased
 ____ Remained about the same
14. Over the last three years, would you say the gross dollar sales from your products sold at this market has: Check one.
 ____ Increased, about ____ percent
 ____ Decreased, about ____ percent
 ____ Remained about the same
15. Do you have plans for expanding any phase of your operation in the next five years, including what you grow, the volume of produce you sell or the way you market your products?
 ____ Yes
 ____ No
 If yes, what do you plan to expand? _____
16. How would you evaluate your experience selling at the _____ Farmers Market this year?

17. What changes, if any, would you like to see in the market next year regarding the dates and times open?
 Season open? (months) _____
 Days open in the week? _____
 Hours open? _____
18. What suggestions do you have for the operation of the _____ Farmers Market next year?

19. We would like to do some planning for next year's market. Are you planning to sell at the market next year?
Check one.
 ____ Yes
 ____ No (If no, skip question 20.)
20. Please list the produce you will be able to sell at the _____ Farmers Market next year, as well as the amount and dates it will be available.
- | <u>Specific item</u> | <u>Amount</u> | <u>Dates Available (From: To:)</u> |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <u>Example: Sweet Corn</u> | <u>Example: 20 Bushels</u> | <u>(Example: July 1 to August 1)</u> |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
21. Do you feel your sales at the market are hampered by any of the following?
 ____ The physical facility and parking? Explain _____
 ____ Rules or regulations of the market? Explain _____
 ____ Traffic flow through the market? Explain _____
 ____ Amount of advertising and promotion? Explain _____
 ____ Lack of customers at the market? Explain _____

Thank you for your cooperation. Please return the completed survey in the envelope provided.

APPENDIX F

Sample Personal Interview for Customers during Market Operation

Interviewer _____ Date and Time of Interview _____

Introduction: Hello, I'm _____ with the _____ Farmers Market. We're conducting a survey on this farmers market and I have a few questions I'd like to ask about your shopping trip here today.

1. First of all, what brought you, or why did you come to the market today? Check one.

(Do not read responses.)

- ☐ Need or want fruits and vegetables
- ☐ Bedding plants, nursery stock or cut flowers
- ☐ Just heard about market and decided to try it
- ☐ Shopped here before and like to shop here
- ☐ Referred by others (friends, relatives)
- ☐ Passing by, attracted by market
- ☐ Can buy in quantity
- ☐ Can buy specialty items
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

2. Are you shopping alone or with members of your household?

- ☐ Woman or wife alone
- ☐ Man or husband alone
- ☐ Couple
- ☐ Two or more women together
- ☐ Couple with child(ren)
- ☐ Women with child(ren)
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

3. About how long does it take you to travel to the market? Check one.

(Do not read responses.)

- ☐ 10 minutes or less
- ☐ 15 minutes
- ☐ 20 minutes
- ☐ 30 minutes
- ☐ 45 minutes or more
- ☐ Walk, ride bus or bike

4. In which city or town do you live? _____

5. How many times have you shopped at this market since it opened?

- ☐ First time (If first time to shop at market, go to Question 13)
- ☐ 2 to 4 times
- ☐ 5 to 7 times
- ☐ 8 or more times

6. How did you first learn of this market? (Do not read responses.)

- ☐ Neighbor, relative or friend
- ☐ Newspaper or shopping guide
- ☐ Road sign or passing by
- ☐ Radio, television
- ☐ Informational brochure
- ☐ Fliers
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

7. Do you usually combine shopping at the market with other errands and business?
Check only one.
☐ Usually come only to market
☐ Usually combine market visit with other errands and business
☐ Sometimes come only to markets and sometimes combine with errands
8. Which day or days do you usually shop here? Check those that apply.
☐ Wednesday
☐ Friday
☐ Saturday
☐ No special day or it varies
9. What time of day do you usually shop here? Check one.
☐ Morning
☐ Afternoon
☐ Evening
☐ It varies
10. Are you generally satisfied with the days and hours the market is open?
☐ Yes
☐ No
 If No : What changes in hours or days would you suggest? _____
11. Are there any products you make a special effort to buy at this market during the season?
☐ Yes
☐ No
 If Yes: Please give an example of these products?
☐ Fresh fruits and vegetables
☐ Cut flowers and/or potted plants
☐ Nursery stock
☐ Honey
☐ Crafts
☐ Other (explain) _____
12. Would you say that you buy fresh fruits and vegetables here at the market primarily for:
☐ Immediate consumption
☐ Freezing and canning
☐ Both
13. How many different stalls did you buy products from today?
☐ Stalls If answer is none or 0, go to Question 15
14. What products specifically did you buy today (fruits, vegetables, other)?
- | <u>Vegetables</u> | <u>Fruits</u> | <u>Other items</u> |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beans | <input type="checkbox"/> Blackberries | <input type="checkbox"/> Baked goods |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beets | <input type="checkbox"/> Cantaloupe | <input type="checkbox"/> Bedding plants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli | <input type="checkbox"/> Oranges | <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas trees/wreaths |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cabbage | <input type="checkbox"/> Grapefruit | <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh eggs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carrots | <input type="checkbox"/> Honeydew melons | <input type="checkbox"/> Crafts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corn | <input type="checkbox"/> Peaches | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut flowers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cucumber | <input type="checkbox"/> Pecan | <input type="checkbox"/> Potted plants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greens | <input type="checkbox"/> Plums | <input type="checkbox"/> Honey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lettuce | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkin | <input type="checkbox"/> Meat products |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mushrooms | <input type="checkbox"/> Strawberries | <input type="checkbox"/> Other items (list) |

<input type="checkbox"/> Onions	<input type="checkbox"/> Watermelon	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Peanuts	<input type="checkbox"/> Other fruits (list)	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Peas (black-eyed)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Peppers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Potatoes	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Spinach		
<input type="checkbox"/> Squash		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sweet potatoes		
<input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes		
<input type="checkbox"/> Turnips		
<input type="checkbox"/> Others (list)		

15. Are there any products that you would have liked to buy today but were unable to find for sale?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Which products were you unable to find?

16. What do you like the most about shopping at this market?

Check response and ask "Is there anything else you like?" Do not read the responses.

☐ Like shopping at the market, seeing friends, enjoyable experience

☐ Variety and selection of products available

☐ Quality and freshness of products available

☐ Lower prices, good prices, economical

☐ Price in relationship to quality

☐ Can do comparison shopping

☐ Cleanliness of display area and market

☐ Like to buy direct from growers

☐ "Atmosphere" of market

☐ Market personnel are friendly and helpful

☐ Convenient location

☐ Items unavailable elsewhere, or available only in small quantities

☐ Not sure

☐ Other (explain)

17. What do you dislike about shopping at this market? Do not read responses.

☐ Nothing in particular I dislike

☐ Market is too crowded; aisles too narrow; small walkways

☐ Dirty, unclean market; need better litter control; restrooms not clean

☐ Parking, not enough space; lots not paved; full of potholes, etc.

☐ Need refreshment stand or lunch counter

☐ Restroom facilities

☐ Telephones – not enough or not available

☐ Too cold or hot to shop

☐ Other (explain)

Varieties available, quality, prices

☐ Products not fresh

☐ Not enough selection and variety of products and/or containers available

☐ Prices are too high

☐ Prices are fixed, or same at all stalls

☐ Prices not marked on individual groups of products

☐ Dumping produce from display container into bag after purchase

☐ Some sellers are unfriendly and not helpful

Rules, regulations and policies practiced at market

- ☐ Need more advertising and promotion
- ☐ Not open evenings
- ☐ Not aware of hours and days open
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

18. Do you have any suggestions as to how might this market be improved? “Any other improvements you might suggest?” Do not read responses. ☐ No particular suggestions

Physical facility and parking

- ☐ Wider aisles; market less crowded; less cluttered
- ☐ Cleaner market; need better litter control; restrooms cleaner
- ☐ More parking; lots paved
- ☐ Need refreshment stand or lunch counter
- ☐ Restrooms and telephones
- ☐ Improve traffic flow
- ☐ Enlarge market
- ☐ Enclose to protect from weather

Varieties available, quality, prices

- ☐ Better quality; not as variable as quantity
- ☐ More selection and variety of products and/or containers available
- ☐ Lower prices
- ☐ Prices not fixed or same at all stalls
- ☐ Prices need to be marked on individual groups of products
- ☐ Don't dump produce from display container into bag after purchase
- ☐ Sellers more friendly and helpful

Rules, regulations and policies practiced at the market

- ☐ Need more advertising and promotion
- ☐ Open evenings
- ☐ List of hours and days open
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

19. How many persons are living in your household now, including you? _____

20. What is the age of the female head of your household? Is it:

- ☐ Under 30 ☐ 30-34 ☐ 35-39 ☐ 40-44 ☐ 45-49 ☐ 50-54
- ☐ 55-59 ☐ 60 and over
- ☐ No female head
- ☐ Refused

21. What best approximates your total family income last year, before taxes were deducted?

Would you say it was:

- ☐ Under \$20,000
- ☐ \$20,000 to 49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to 79,999
- ☐ \$80,000 to 100,000
- ☐ \$100,000 to 150,000
- ☐ Over \$150,000
- ☐ Refused

APPENDIX G

Sample Farmers Market Site Review Sheet

Market Name: _____

Market Address: _____

Market Contact Person: _____ Phone Number: _____

Date of Review: _____

Evaluator's Name: _____

Does the market have an active board of directors or other governing body? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is the market a project of multiple agencies that are active in supporting it? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is there an updated set of market rules and operating guidelines? ☐ yes ☐ no

Description of the Market Facilities:

Bad --- Fair --- Good --- Very Good --- Excellent

- Structure 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Restrooms 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Utilities 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Well-marked stalls 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Other 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8

Description of the Market Location:

- Immediate surroundings 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Nearby residential situation 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Proximity to other shopping 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Adjacent property uses 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Street-level visibility 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Convenience for drivers 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Other 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8

Description of the Parking Situation:

- Adequate customer parking 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Adequate vendor parking 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Parking surfaces 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Well-marked parking spaces 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Other 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8

Signage:

- Directional signage to the market 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Market hours posted 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- On-site signage 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Other 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8

Other Market Attributes:

- "Extra" features 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Other observations 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Trouble spots 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Property ownership 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Market management situation 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8
- Zoning designation 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8

APPENDIX H

Sample Farmers Market Safety Checklist

Market Name: _____		
Market Address: _____		
Market Contact Person: _____ Phone Number: _____		
Date of Review: _____		
Evaluator's Name: _____		
Each safety issue below should be evaluated based on the following: S = Satisfactory - - - U = Unsatisfactory - - - NA = Not Applicable		
Rating [S-U-NA]	Safety Issues	Comments
	Surface of parking area is smooth, clean and safe for pedestrians and automobiles.	
	Parking areas are clearly marked for traffic, spaces and pedestrians.	
	Speed bumps are used where needed?	
	Curbs/parking bumps are secured and visible?	
	Poles, posts and other obstructions are visible?	
	Are clear pedestrian walkways to and from the market clearly marked?	
	Are pets allowed in the market?	
	Is the use of bicycles and skateboards prohibited during market hours?	
	Are “no-smoking” and “no-open flames” policies clearly marked?	
	Are fire hydrants and fire lanes clearly marked and accessible?	
	Are walking areas relatively even/smooth?	
	Are elevation changes and abrupt walkway edges identified and marked?	

	Is access for disabled customers provided at proper locations?	
	Is a first-aid kit easily accessible?	
	Does the market have a system with vendors for notification of an emergency?	
	Does the market have a system and mechanism established for notifying E 911?	
	Is a fire extinguisher available and in good working order?	
	Are an adequate number of trash cans available?	
	Does the market have a safety evacuation plan and are vendors informed of it?	
	Are all display materials of sturdy and secure construction?	
	Are "off-limits" areas marked as such?	
	Are produce and other food products displayed at least 6 inches off the ground?	
	Do all areas of the market (including parking) have good and adequate lighting?	
	Are all electrical wiring and extension cords properly rated and secured?	
	Are any dangers noticed from potential falling objects?	
	Are any unnecessary dangers or obstacles noticed on the ground?	
<p>Additional concerns/comments:</p>		

APPENDIX I

Sample Farmers Market Rules

1. The market will be in operation from May to October on the following days and times (season and hours may be adjusted or extended by the Farmers Market Association Board of Directors):
 Wednesday 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
 Saturday 6:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
 Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
2. No selling is allowed before the posted market times. Vendors cannot bag, sell or hold items for customers prior to the opening bell.
3. Vendors wishing to obtain a permanent stall must be a member of the Farmers Market Association.
4. The seasonal fee (reserved) for each 12' by 10' booth space will be \$ _____. The daily fee (first-come) for each 12' by 10' booth space will be _____. Fees are payable in cash or a good check at the time permit numbers are issued. If a reserved stall is not occupied within 30 minutes after the opening bell, it will be subject to leasing to another vendor for that day at the discretion of the market manager. A penalty for bad checks will be charged in the amount of two-times the amount of the check.
5. Vendors must be farmers that reside in _____ County or in a county adjacent to _____ County. Resellers of only non-local products are not allowed to sell at this market. However, farmers or resellers whose product mix is at least 50 percent home-grown or local may sell. Vendors should be prepared to verify for the market manager the source of all products purchased for resale. Misrepresentation of "_____-County Grown" or "Tennessee-Grown" products is cause for automatic expulsion from the market.
6. All vendors must display a sign indicating their name, phone number and address.
7. Each vendor must display his/her market permit number.
8. Vendors may sell from the back of pick-up trucks, but only from within their assigned stall. Vendor vehicles must not be parked outside the space of the assigned vendor stall. Vendor vehicles not parked within the dimension of the booth space must be parked in the lot marked as vendor parking. No overnight parking is allowed.
9. The following items may be offered for sale at the market: fruits, vegetables, farm-fresh eggs, plants, herbs, flowers, honey and other farm products approved in advance by the market manager. Live animals may be advertised at individual booths for off-site sales but live animals are not allowed in the market. Baked goods, jams, jellies, sauces, cider, breads and meats that have been prepared in legal, licensed, approved and inspected facilities by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture or USDA are allowed. Proof of inspection is required and must be prominently posted in the booth. Alcoholic beverages, cigarettes and firearms cannot be sold at the market.
10. Daily vendors must check-in with the market manager and be assigned a booth space and market permit number prior to setting up.
11. Sales must be made in an orderly and business-like fashion. Shouting, hawking and other loud and objectionable tactics of solicitation are not allowed. Profanity is not allowed. Loud radios are not allowed.
12. No fruit or vegetable products (sold for consumption) can be displayed directly on the ground/concrete. Fruits and vegetables must be displayed off the ground.

13. Each stall should be kept neat, clean and free from offensive odors. Attractive and sturdy trash cans will be placed throughout the market facility.
14. Tables, scales, bags, sacks, boards/shelves, baskets, signs, containers, change and chairs must be provided by each vendor. Scales must be certified by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and must be posted as approved.
15. Applicable sales tax is the responsibility of each vendor.
16. A single-vendor stall may not be shared by more than three independent growers, farmers or vendors.
17. No signs, displays or shelves can remain at the market.
18. No pets are allowed inside the market shed.
19. No smoking inside the market shed. No alcohol is allowed on market property.
20. No bikes, skateboards, scooters or other means of transport allowed in the market shed.
21. Stalls and booths must be cleaned before the vendor departs the market each day.
22. The market facility is accessible for the disabled. All vendors should assist in making sure that the market is a safe and accessible environment for all customers.
23. Vendors will set their own prices. However, vendors using the market as a dumping ground for surplus products at prices significantly below prevailing market prices is discouraged.
24. Vendors are required to provide the market manager with a “daily sales summary” form each day.
25. Intentional price undercutting of other vendors is not allowed.
26. Vendors are encouraged to clearly mark the price of all products.
27. Complaints must be reported directly to the market manager.
28. Vendors are encouraged to provide only high-quality products.
29. Vendors must carry product liability and personal injury insurance – proof of which is required before a market permit is issued.
30. Enforcement of market guidelines is the sole responsibility of the market manager. Any vendor who is found not in compliance with any of the above guidelines will:
 - first: receive a warning from the manager
 - second: be asked to leave the market and will not be allowed to return to the market unless approved by the board of directors.
31. All concerns or complaints regarding the rules of this market should first be discussed with the market manager. Vendors have the right to a hearing before the entire board of directors within two weeks of a written request to the board chairperson.
32. Vendors are required to attend at least one “vendor education” program hosted by the Farmers Market Association.

APPENDIX J

Additional Resources That Address Safe Food-Handling Practices

- Food Safety at Farmers Markets and Agritourism Venues: A Primer for California Operators
Desmond Jolly and Chris Lewis
University of California Small Farm Center
2005
<<http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/docs/publications.asp?view=11>>
- Temporary Food Facility Guidelines: Your Guide to Handling Food and Food Booth Requirements
San Luis Obispo County Health Department Environmental Health Services
San Luis Obispo, California
<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Assets/PH/Forms/TEMPFOOD_FACHANDOUT.pdf>
- Food Safety for Farmers' Markets
Karen Garst
Extension Horticulturist
Kansas State University
MF-2260, May 1997
<<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/hort2/mf2260.pdf>>
- Postharvest Handling of Fruits and Vegetables
Janet Bachmann and Richard Earles
NCAT Agriculture Specialists
August 2000 <<http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/farmmrkt.html>>
- Safe Handling of Food at Open Markets
Judy M. Willingham
Extension Associate
Kansas State University
March 2001
<<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/fntr2/FOODASYST/8market.pdf>>

Visit the UT Extension Web site at
<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/>

07-0239 B1770-1.2M-6/07 R12-4010-026-007-07

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